



# **STATEMENT**

**by**

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRIME  
MINISTER**

**MR. SAMUEL NTSOKOANE MATEKANE**

**Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho**

**During the 80<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations  
General Assembly (UNGA)**

**New York,**

**26<sup>th</sup> September, 2025**

**Madam President of the 80<sup>th</sup> Session of the  
General Assembly,**

**Your Excellencies, Heads of State and  
Government,**

**Mr. Secretary General of the United Nations,**

I extend heartfelt congratulations to You, Madam President, on your election as President of the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Your assumption of this esteemed office, as the fifth woman since the founding of the United Nations eighty (80) years ago, stands as a powerful affirmation of Member States' enduring commitment to the principle of gender equality

and women empowerment which are the essential pillars of the United Nations.

As one of your Vice Presidents, my delegation pledges its full support and cooperation to ensure a successful and impactful tenure of office as the President of the 80<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly.

We also take this opportunity to commend your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Philemon Yang, for his distinguished leadership during the 79th Session. Africa takes pride in his exemplary service and the values he brought to the global stage.

To the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, we express our profound appreciation for your unwavering dedication to the multilateral system and to the service of humanity, particularly in

these challenging times underpinned by rising global tensions and trade wars.

Notwithstanding these self-less contributions, we remain deeply concerned by the budgetary constraints facing our organization which derail the work of the organization and the attainment of its goals.

The ongoing volatility in global trade and the unilateral protectionist measures including the selective adherence to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the UN constitute the main challenges to the multilateral system.

In addition, the apparent disregard of the United Nations General Assembly decisions by some of the powerful members undermines the credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations.

All these challenges require our collective and concerted efforts to achieve the objectives of the UN.

**Madam President,**

I wish to inform this august Assembly that, since 2014, the Kingdom of Lesotho has embarked on a path of Comprehensive National Reforms, aimed at addressing the legacy of political and security instability.

These reforms, supported by our international partners—including the United Nations, the European Union, the Commonwealth, the Southern African Development Community and the African Union, have culminated in the adoption of the Tenth Amendment to our Constitution, a landmark achievement in our pursuit of sustainable peace and stability.

Under my leadership, the Government of Lesotho remains resolute in engaging all stakeholders to complete the remaining components of this vital process.

We recognize that peace and security are the foundations for inclusive and sustainable development.

The success of our reform agenda will serve as a testament to the power of preventive diplomacy and its alignment with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

In this regard, we call upon our friends and partners across the globe to continue supporting our reform efforts, so that Lesotho can reclaim its rightful place among the Comity of Nations.

**Madam President,**

At the sub-regional level, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has acknowledged a significant milestone in Lesotho's national reform journey by formally removing the Kingdom from the SADC Organ Troika agenda of countries under special observations.

We welcome this decision with deep appreciation and reaffirm our unwavering commitment to completing the remaining constitutional amendments, namely the Eleventh and Twelfth Amendments.

With the continued support of the international community, we are confident that our collective efforts will culminate in lasting peace and stability while paving way for inclusive economic development.

**Madam President,**

The theme of this 80th Session—**Better Together: 80 Years and More for Peace, Development and Human Rights**—resonates profoundly with the founding principles of the United Nations.

It also reflects the enduring mission of the United Nations. It further calls for renewed multilateral cooperation to address global challenges, and advance the pillars of peace, sustainable development, and human rights.

**Madam President,**

We welcome the outcomes of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries.

These landmark gatherings offered Member States a rare opportunity to renew their



commitment to bridging the financing gap for developing nations and to address the unique challenges faced by countries in special situations, such as Lesotho.

While Official Development Assistance (ODA) is regrettably in decline, it remains a vital source of development financing for Least Developed Countries. Its reduction threatens to erode the progress achieved thus far.

We therefore, make a clarion call to development partners to honour their ODA commitments, thereby safeguarding vulnerable nations from the risk of entrenched poverty and underdevelopment.

At the national level, Lesotho is intensifying efforts to mobilize domestic resources by curbing illicit financial flows and enhancing revenue administration.

This includes improving the efficiency of our tax systems and broadening the tax base through aggressive industrialization.

We are also embarking on a transformative path through the Just Energy Transition Initiative, a visionary programme championed by His Majesty King Letsie III.

As we may all be aware, Lesotho is endowed with the pristine mountain waters, strong winds, and year-round sunshine thus offering unique potential for hydro, wind, and solar energy.

Our goal is to harness these resources to achieve our domestic and regional energy security and climate adaptation.

This clean energy potential also creates opportunities for Lesotho to host data centers,

powered sustainably by renewables and cooled naturally by our temperate highland climate.

Such facilities would not only advance Africa's digital transformation but also do so in a way that is environmentally responsible and cost-effective.

Lesotho is therefore, open for investments and partnerships in building global data centres, renewable energy and water resources.

**Madam President,**

Digital transformation is reshaping our world. For developing countries like Lesotho, the implementation of the Global Digital Compact is not a luxury—it is a necessity.

To ensure resilience and inclusive development, the Government of Lesotho is prioritizing investments in affordable digital infrastructure, promoting digital literacy, and nurturing innovation ecosystems.

These efforts are particularly focused on empowering youth, women, and rural communities.

Let us bear in mind that the continent of Africa is home to the largest number of youth, that is 70% under the age of 30 years.

Our collective ability to harness their potential in different productive sectors of our economies remains one of the most viable solutions to our structural challenges.

In this regard, we invite all and sundry to ensure youth participation in governance,

entrepreneurship, and decision-making processes.

**Madam President,**

Agriculture remains the cornerstone of economic activity in Landlocked Least Developed Countries. However, it is disproportionately affected by climate shocks.

To mitigate these impacts, greater investments in adaptation and resilience are essential.

We warmly welcome the proposal to establish Regional Agriculture Research Hubs under the Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Such centres have the potential to provide access to sustainable agricultural practices and innovations critical for enhancing agricultural security and reducing poverty.

I am happy to reaffirm Lesotho's interest in hosting such a centre for the African Region.

**Madam President,**

Addressing the global climate emergency and ecosystem degradation demands coordinated international action.

Extreme weather events, erratic rainfall, and drought threaten food systems, water resources, and financial stability.

The preservation of biodiversity and sustainable management of natural resources—on land and at sea—are critical to climate adaptation.

Though landlocked, Lesotho recognizes the integral role of oceans in the global climate system.

In this spirit, Lesotho signed the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) on 13 June 2025, during the United Nations Ocean Conference in France.

This act, reaffirms our belief that stewardship of the high seas is a shared responsibility of all humankind.

**Madam President,**

A healthy population is the bedrock of a resilient and prosperous nation.

Lesotho remains committed to ensuring equitable, accessible, and quality healthcare for all, regardless of age, gender, or location.

We continue to expand primary healthcare services, with emphasis on sexual and reproductive health, maternal and child health, communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, and the growing burden of non-communicable diseases.

Lesotho also recognizes that universal health coverage cannot be achieved without addressing gender inequality.

We remain steadfast in mainstreaming gender equality, strengthening women's rights, and eliminating gender-based violence.

**Madam President,**

As we mark eighty (80) years of the United Nations, the UN institutional reforms are indeed, essential for relevance and efficiency.



Eight decades since its founding, the United Nations must evolve to meet contemporary challenges. Reform of the UN Security Council must not remain a distant aspiration eternally.

Deliberate efforts by all of us must be made towards ensuring that negotiations garner the requisite support so that the historic injustices of the past are corrected.

For us as Lesotho, we reaffirm our support for the common African position which is commonly known as the 'Ezulwini Consensus'.

We also welcome the Secretary-General's UN80 initiative aimed at enhancing the Organization's effectiveness.

As this initiative unfolds, we emphasize the importance of equitable representation within the

Secretariat and sensitivity to the vulnerabilities of developing states.

We trust that Member States will be duly consulted throughout this process.

**Madam President,**

Lesotho remains committed to the maintenance of international peace and security, a core mandate of the United Nations.

Yet, we are deeply troubled by ongoing armed conflicts around the world, which pose grave threats to global stability.

Of particular concern is the protracted conflict in Gaza, which has resulted in immense human suffering, especially among women, children, and other vulnerable groups.

We commend efforts by Member States to pursue peace in the Middle East conflict and call for the immediate and unconditional release of all remaining hostages.

We further call for a permanent ceasefire to prevent further loss of innocent lives. The resolution of international disputes must be grounded in dialogue, justice, and equality.

Lesotho continues to advocate for a Two-State solution, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions.

### **Madam President**

The use of unilateral coercive measures by some states on others, remain a source of concern for my delegation.

The consequences of such measures are also felt beyond the borders of the targeted countries.

Under this regime, the peoples of Zimbabwe and Cuba continue to suffer for unnecessarily too long.

My delegation therefore renews its call for unconditional removal of the unilateral sanctions in order to afford these two countries the opportunity to achieve the most aspired development.

As I conclude, Madam President, Lesotho remains steadfast in its commitment to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognizing them as a blueprint for inclusive and resilient development.

Through a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, Lesotho has integrated the SDGs into its national development frameworks and continues to align sectoral policies accordingly.

The country has demonstrated transparency and accountability by regularly submitting Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) to the United Nations, showcasing progress, identifying challenges, and reaffirming its dedication to leaving no one behind. The last of these reports was presented in July 2025.

The 80th anniversary of the United Nations marks a profound milestone in the collective journey of humanity toward peace, development, and the protection of human rights.

Over eight decades, the Organization has stood as a beacon of multilateral cooperation, guiding Member States through moments of triumph and adversity.

As we commemorate this legacy, we must also look ahead with renewed purpose and resolve.

The future demands a United Nations that is more inclusive, responsive, and equipped to address emerging global challenges—from climate change and digital transformation, to rising inequality and geopolitical tensions.

The next chapter must be defined by bold action, strengthened solidarity, and a shared commitment to leave no one behind.

**I thank you for your attention.**