

General Debate of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly

Address by H.E. Mr. Luc Frieden
Prime Minister of Luxembourg

New York, 26 September 2025

Madame President, Mr. Secretary-General,

The Second World War was the deadliest conflict in history. It took the combined efforts of fifty nations to resist the Axis Powers and end their seemingly unstoppable campaign of conquest and subjugation.

But in the course of their struggle, Allied countries, including my own, found a second, even bigger, purpose. They would end the war. And they would seek to end war itself.

They were driven by a dream of a world in which conflict is replaced by cooperation, oppression by freedom, and misery by prosperity.

They were driven by hope, not fear – unwavering in their belief that the world could be changed for the better.

- A world of peace, in which war would be prevented not just for their generation, but for all those to come after them.

- A world of justice, in which the relations between nations would be governed not by force, but by law.
- A world of freedom, in which people do not face oppression, but enjoy fundamental rights without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

These ideals go hand in hand: peace, justice, freedom, dignity, human rights, international law.

Looking back – and indeed at the current state of world affairs – it is painfully obvious that we are not always living up to these ideals.

The last few years have seen an unprecedented erosion of international norms and violations of humanitarian law.

The international order is at breaking point. Too few defend it. Too many have lost faith in it.

For Luxembourg, the UN still represents the highest of mankind's ambitions.

As much as the United Nations represents these *ideals*, it represents a different *method*, a paradigm shift in the *way* countries deal with each other and their common challenges. Words, not weapons. Diplomacy, not warfare. Solidarity, not confrontation.

The establishment of the United Nations eighty years ago was not the *end* of the journey to peace. It was its *beginning*.

That journey must be made anew every single day. Luxembourg will always be ready to pursue that journey of dialogue and cooperation, together with all others willing to work for peace.

Because war, with all its horrible results, is nothing but the final expression of that radical unwillingness to compromise at the root of all human conflict, that stubborn refusal to even listen to the other side.

It is this uncompromising spirit that starts wars, creates divisions and hinders progress, leaving all of us worse off.

The United Nations, however, represents the opposite spirit. It stands for the relentless pursuit of compromise, for the formidable power of reconciliation.

But the United Nations as an institution cannot work wonders. Its success depends on all of us. It will work, its ideals can be achieved, when we adopt this spirit in all our decisions.

- When we work for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine respecting its sovereignty, self-determination and territorial integrity.

- When we work for an immediate ceasefire and full humanitarian access in Gaza, as well as for the release of all hostages.
- When we work for the implementation of the two-State solution, with the State of Israel and the State of Palestine living side by side in peace and security. To maintain that objective, this week Luxembourg formally recognized the State of Palestine.
- When we work to ensure equal rights, to educate all children, to eradicate hunger and disease and to protect our cultural heritage.
- And when we work for a United Nations that is fit for purpose, with a more effective and representative governance, and with the necessary resources to keep pushing us towards our ideals.

Luxembourg will be a reliable partner in all these efforts. Because we know the value of a stable, multilateral world order.

We knew it 80 years ago, when we signed the Charter. And we know it today, as one of the largest per capita donors to official development assistance, consistently contributing 1% of our gross national income. Just this week, we signed four new strategic partnership frameworks with crucial UN agencies.

Because the sad lesson of history is that, in the end, when the war ends and the dust settles on ruined cities and unnecessary cemeteries, that uncompromising spirit must still give way.

And we must still live together. We must still talk and work with each other. We still share a common planet and a common humanity.

That realization lies at the origin of this great institution. Giving Germany, Italy and Japan the opportunity of a new start was the most farsighted, even if the least intuitive, decision of the twentieth century.

So, I call on all countries to honor the promise made to mankind in San Francisco: that humanity would work together to abandon war, and seek peace by taking a new approach, by following a different spirit, the spirit of the United Nations.

One that puts dialogue first and makes every effort to settle differences by peaceful means, through mutually acceptable compromises.

Let's do it to honor those working here and across the world in the interest of all of humanity – for food security, for refugee protection, for global health, for the environment.

Let's do it to honor those generations before us who built this institution – giving us the opportunity to turn their legacy of hope into reality.

And above all, let's do it to honor the generations yet to come – who have every right to expect growing up in a world of peace, freedom and prosperity.

Let's recall this spirit today. And let's remember it every day. Every day is a new opportunity to match our words with action. Because ultimately, history will judge us by what we do.

The United Nations can continue to count on Luxembourg. In word and in deed.

Thank you.