

**BAHAMAS NATIONAL STATEMENT TO
UNGA 2025**

Friday 26th September 2025

Madam President Annalena Baerbock,

We offer our warm congratulations on your election to preside over this eightieth session of the General Assembly, and we thank your predecessor His Excellency Philémon Yang for a job well done.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In celebrating 80 years of the global community in coming together in this United Nations, we must remind ourselves of how we got here.

The United Nations was not born out of some high-minded ideal, or because humanity suddenly decided to promote its collective virtue.

No – the UN was created out of the ashes of a period when humanity had almost destroyed itself.

The blood-soaked trenches of the First World War, brought about by the rivalries between the great powers of the day.

The collapse of the League of Nations, made im-po-tent because of the refusal of the major powers to participate.

The despair of the Great Depression.

The rise of fascist ambition, which led to the devastation of the Second World War.

The terror of atomic weapons.

These are the foundation of the United Nations.

Over one hundred million died, many more driven into poverty.

I recite these histories because that is not a world we wish to return to.

We are in danger of being doomed to repeat the brutal lessons of history.

When nations go their separate ways, history teaches us that disaster eventually follows.

When nations stand together, survival and prosperity become possible.

With the stench of the atomic firestorms still hovering over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the world raced to come together in a single body, to prevent such things from happening again.

The need for nations to unite in a single forum has never been more pressing.

2. MULTILATERALISM IS THE SOLUTION

This multilateral effort is not a cure-all.

Wherever humans live, there will be conflict.

But today's crises are far more complex, and seemingly more intractable and even more dangerous than 80 years ago.

The atomic weapons of the 1940s have proliferated into the nuclear weapons of today, able to wipe out all human life many times over.

Diseases now cross oceans in a day, potentially leading to pandemics that can last for years.

Cyberattacks can leap borders in a second.

Financial contagion can cripple economies in an instant.

And climate change, - yes, climate change - whose storms and rising seas and fires and

floods make no distinction between rich or poor, strong or weak, can devastate us all.

No single nation, acting on its own, can resolve these.

Multilateral approaches are not the problem.

Multilateral approaches offer pathways to the solutions.

The United Nations is not perfect, but it is the best tool for multilateral action that we have.

We workmen should not blame our tools.

The flaw is not in the hammer, but in the hand that lets it fall.

Your Excellencies:

The Commonwealth of The Bahamas is committed to work with Members to find solutions.

It is why we have offered ourselves as a candidate for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the 2032-2033 term.

This is not a candidacy just for ourselves.

It is for every small state that not only insists that its voice must count, but also knows that we have much to contribute in matters of global peace.

For example, we cannot turn away from the agony of the Middle East.

The aspirations of the Palestinian people for dignity and self-determination are real. Along with the state of Israel, both peoples have a right to security, sovereignty, and peace.

For generations, this conflict has tested the conscience of the world.

But resignation is not an option.

The vision of two states, living side by side in peace and mutual recognition, remains the only pathway to justice, stability, and reconciliation.

We must not abandon dialogue for despair.

The multilateral capabilities and capacity of the UN should be front and centre of this effort.

If we think that the organisation has structural and institutional weaknesses, then let's fix them.

If we think that standards are not evenly applied, that powerful states avoid consequences for aggression or human rights abuses, while weaker states are sanctioned more readily, then let's step up and fix them.

The UN is only the sum of its parts.

Any lack of effectiveness, any lack of practical impact, lies squarely at the feet of Member States.

The solution is not to abandon it, but to fix it.

3. FOR THE BAHAMAS: THE CHALLENGES AND CRISES FACING OUR COUNTRY ARE EXTERNAL

For countries like The Bahamas, the biggest challenges and crises we face are not of our making.

And yet we are the ones who feel the impacts the most.

Our independent Bahamas has never fought a war: and yet conflicts in faraway places cause severe economic shocks, with Bahamians forced to pay higher prices and suffer from unreliable supply chains.

Above all, it is the physical changes relating to climate, that are causing crises which are critical, urgent and existential.

Over the past few years, many Bahamian voices have raised the alarm in many international forums, about the risks we face from threats of climate change.

We do not have the luxury of re-starting an esoteric conversation about the causes of climate change.

Our living reality means that we simply do not have the time.

As I speak to you today, right now, right now a Tropical Storm is moving up our chain of islands.

We hope.

We pray that we are lucky.

But can we remain lucky every season?

Every single year?

We know what we need to do.

We need to adapt and to make ourselves more resilient.

But even with the best intentions, a Small Island State like ours, with a population of around 400,000 people and an economy of approximately \$12 billion, we do not have the resources.

We have the cleanest air in the world, and emit far less than 1% of carbon generated by human

activity, so we have to rely on others to also adapt.

Is it really too much to ask of those most responsible, to change their behaviour so that the rest of us might have a better chance at survival?

Along with climate change, our closest neighbours also suffer from a number of external threats.

Our neighbours in Cuba have suffered for decades under an embargo which has caused suffering without delivering justice.

The embargo has punished ordinary people without changing policy.

Friends: Engagement, not isolation, is the only path forward.

And so, The Bahamas will continue to add its voice to the many who say:

“The time has come.

Lift the embargo”.

And what of Haiti?

Too often the suffering of its people has been met with indifference.

The Multinational Security Support Mission, under Kenyan leadership, has been an important bridge.

But bridges must be a pathway to the solution.

That mission must evolve into a force strong enough to meet the still-present threat of violence and lawlessness.

But Haiti needs more than security.

It needs investment, partnership, and hope.

The lack of security in Haiti disproportionately, adversely impacts the security of The Bahamas.

And we can no longer continue to carry so much of the burden and plight of the Haitian people.

The world must act.

We say this not out of fatigue, but out of the conscious realization that a crisis of this magnitude cannot be left to neighbours alone.

It requires a global response.

The Bahamas therefore calls for a dedicated United Nations Support Office for Haiti: an institution to coordinate aid, sustain international attention, strengthen institutions, and nurture democracy.

We cannot claim fidelity to peace, and at the same time, ignore Haiti.

4. THE DYSTOPIAN ALTERNATIVE

Your Excellencies:

The lessons of history are clear.

To retreat into a world of i-so-la-tionist protectionism, where might is right, and the resources of the planet are plundered for the few, is to return to a time when life was famously described as “nasty, brutish and short”¹.

¹ ‘*Leviathan*’, by Thomas Hobbes (1651)

There would be a fairly swift breakdown in international peace and security.

With no global forum for conflict mediation, there is a strong likelihood that disputes would more often escalate into wars, border clashes and proxy conflicts.

With every country facing increasingly dangerous and rapid climate change, the collective action needed to address it, would likely hasten climate breakdown.

The kind of economic fragmentation that heralded the Great Depression in America in the 1930s would re-emerge.

Protectionist sanctions and trade barriers, the collapse of supply chains and the resulting higher costs of living around the world, would recreate the same conditions that fuelled the rise of fascism, and the explosion of the Second World War.

Is this what we really want?

No matter how imperfect, are we really prepared to throw away what we have?

5. ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST

Your Excellencies:

We recognise that we seem to live in a time when the global community appears indifferent to the suffering and deaths of millions of our fellow human beings.

And yet, even in the face of potential climate disaster, today we ask not for your pity.

We do not ask for charity.

We ask simply that you act in your own, enlightened self-interest.

The security and prosperity of all of us in the region, the hemisphere, and the world are interconnected.

Even if we do not agree on the causes, as I have previously said to this Assembly, our lived

reality is that our storms and hurricanes are your fires and floods.

If The Bahamas were to collapse because of the disproportionate risks we face from climate change, economic vulnerabilities and external geopolitical pressures, the world would lose more than the best tourist destination on the planet.

We ask for nothing more than what we all want.

The right to live in peace and security and in
pursuit of happiness.

But most of all, just the right to live.

Thank you.

END