



STATEMENT

by

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President of the Republic of Suriname

on the occasion of the General Debate
of the
80th Session of the
United Nations General Assembly

New York
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GREETINGS

Your Excellency Annalena Baerbock, President of the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,

Your Excellency António Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to present my first statement to this dignified body today.

Introduction

Madam President,

I extend to you, my sincere congratulations **on your election** to preside over this esteemed gathering.

With your vast experience and knowledge of international affairs, I am confident, that success is guaranteed, during your tenure as President of this General Assembly.

In the same vein, I acknowledge, His Excellency, Philemon Yang for his skillful leadership of the previous session and wish him well in his future endeavors.

Equally we salute and applaud Secretary General Guterres, for his leadership of our organization, especially

during this tumultuous time, when the United Nations and the world are confronted with so many challenges.

Madam President,

We are here to commemorate a special moment in history, as we celebrate the United Nations 80th anniversary.

On behalf of the Government and the People of the Republic of Suriname, I express sincere congratulations to the international community on this occasion.

This 80th session of the General Assembly coincides with the 50th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Suriname and our membership of this Organization.

Peace / 80 Years of United Nations (UN@80)

Madam President,

The United Nations played, in some instances, an important role in ending colonial rule, advancing human rights, and providing hope and a future to the most vulnerable in our global community.

Equally our organization provided a forum for discussions aimed at adopting a framework for the sustainable development agenda.

A journey, that spans over 80 years and which has not been without challenges.

We have come a long way but have an even longer road to travel!

The United Nations is the organization that provided a voice to the global community and worked **to establish a balanced** world order, conducive to development **of peace** and prosperity **for all!**

The Organization contributed significantly to advancing human rights, more specifically the rights of women and children, promoting education for all, and universal access to health care.

In some instances, the peaceful resolution of conflicts was achieved, preventing misery and saving human lives.

Madam President,

On the other hand, we must admit, that the UN sometimes, regrettably has been unsuccessful in avoiding conflicts, wars and violations of human rights.

In Europe and elsewhere, war has returned, displacing millions, killing many and threatening global security.

In several other countries and regions for instance in the Middle – East we have witnessed unspeakable terror at the hands of terrorist organizations. At this moment there are increased occurrences of grave violations of human rights and more specifically the rights of children for example in Gaza.

Also, Madam President, within our own Region we have not been spared of rising tensions.

It is with heightened concern that we noted the Secretary General's recent briefing of the Security Council Meeting, on the situation in Haiti, mentioning that "the Haitians are enduring a perfect storm of suffering".

Suriname strongly reiterates its position that conflicts should primarily be resolved through dialogue.

We remind the international community that Latin America and the Caribbean are proclaimed as a Zone of Peace.

Madam President, we should reflect and ponder on the role and effectiveness of the Organization for the next 80 years. What do we have to change, what needs to be done differently?

The United Nations will only be successful if all nations are committed to the implementation of those matters, we agree upon and the resolutions we adopt.

As Member States, we must come to the realization that the world in which we established the United Nations 80 years ago, no longer exists!

Today, partially because of the work done by our organization, some poor countries have developed substantially, economically and otherwise. They have become powers who can't be ignored any longer.

Madam President,

The task ahead, therefore, is that we in the first place, go back to the table and renew our vows, to recommit to the principles and objectives of the Charter.

This implies that all nations should adhere to the rules and regulations agreed upon in order to attain a peaceful world order, in which all people from all regions, should have opportunities for a dignified life.

Furthermore, the UN should adjust to the world we currently live in. This means that for example, the Security Council should be expanded to include all nations who exert major influence in the world.

Exclusion of these players will only increase the risk of conflict and obstruct the beneficial cooperation, necessary for humanity to develop and prosper.

It is of great importance that all economically and otherwise strong countries, maintain a healthy competition that promotes the scientific advancement, we need for sustainable development.

On the other hand, these countries need to work together to guarantee the global peace, so crucial for the existence and growth of developing states.

In this context, Suriname endorses the inclusion of, amongst others, Brazil, India, and a representation of the African Continent, for equal membership of the Council.

Equally we support the CARICOM position for a non-permanent rotating seat for the Small Island Developing States and Low-lying coastal countries.

I would like to remind member states that my country has presented its candidacy as a non-permanent member of the Council for the period 2043-2044.

Madam President,

The United Nations must be a genuine unity of NATIONS, if our organization, moving forward, wants to play a positive role for a prosperous future for humanity!

Suriname stands firmly for global peace, for the rule of law, and for the equal value of every human life. Let us work together to create the necessary environment which will bring lasting peace to our region and elsewhere.

Considering this, Suriname once again, calls for the lifting of the longstanding embargo against Cuba and its people.

Suriname within the United Nations

Madam President,

Our rich history, and extraordinary cultural diversity of Suriname's people, including Indigenous, Maroon, Javanese, Hindustani, Creole, Chinese, European and more. All living together in a mosaic of cultures and faiths.

Persons from Surinamese Origin living abroad are part of the mosaic of our population and can contribute to socio-economic development of the nation.

We consider this a great asset. Suriname does not have diversity- Suriname is diversity, and we keep working together to protect and grow our national unity for our own wellbeing and as an example of harmony in an often-divided world.

My country also carries immense natural wealth, and it is our vision to create an economy that is resilient, sustainable and inclusive.

Allow me to share with you some elements of my government's vision on our socio-economic development.

Together we strive to build a more resilient and diverse economy, by developing among others, our tourism and agricultural sectors, strengthen our educational system and work towards universal access to basic health care.

Suriname has a vast tourism potential with its green and lustrous hinterland, many waterfalls, rapids and great rivers for relaxation as well as unforgettable adventures, rich biodiversity, cultural treasures and the UNESCO acknowledged historical City of Paramaribo.

Through cooperation in the agriculture sector with our neighbors we aim at improving food security within Suriname and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

My government views energy security as a strategic priority for national development, regional stability, and economic resilience.

With an investment of more than ten billion US dollars, for the development of our offshore oil and gas, the country is getting a new beginning, that will contribute significantly to Suriname's economic growth.

However, oil and gas revenues **should not be the sole fundament of** our economic development; hence we are open for investments in relevant sectors in our country.

We are also steadily advancing our energy transition. While we already source about 50% of our energy needs through hydro power, we are moving toward natural gas and other forms of renewable energy as part of our long-term vision.

Madam President, I firmly believe that education is the foundation upon which every prosperous society is build.

We are committed, to invest in our education system, our teachers, our children and youth. The future of my country depends on the talents and skills of its people.

My government also, strongly reaffirms, its commitment to upholding the rights of Indigenous and Tribal communities, ensuring that their livelihoods, traditions, knowledge systems are respected and preserved, and the acknowledgement of their collective land rights.

Strengthening our institutions is high on our agenda.

Madam President,

Suriname has worked tirelessly on the prevention of diseases and despite the challenges, we have achieved results that we as a country can be proud of.

As of June 30, 2025, Suriname has officially been declared malaria-free by the World Health Organization after 30 years of continuous fight against this disease. The first in the Amazon Region to receive such a recognition.

We are aware of the responsibility to remain vigilant, as Government as well as a community to ensure that these gains are sustained. **Suriname's** example showcases that we too can surely make a valuable contribution in combatting infectious diseases.

CARICOM

Madam President,

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is expanding its outreach and, in this light, Suriname also welcomes the recently concluded 2nd Africa–CARICOM Summit, held in the Republic of Ethiopia.

This, Madam President honors the historic, cultural, and human bonds between our regions. Suriname also acknowledges the CARICOM Ten Point Plan for Reparatory Justice, which has our full and strong endorsement.

We will, furthermore, continue to contribute within CARICOM, aiming at enhancing the organization's geopolitical influence.

Climate

Madam President,

Despite our commitment to the Paris Agreement 10 years ago, the climate crisis is worse than we feared.

Our countries, have least contributed to climate change, but are hit the hardest by its effects, directly impacting the livelihoods and economic growth of our peoples.

Suriname calls for the urgent attention of the international community to address the detrimental impact of climate change facing the small island developing states and countries with low lying coastal areas.

Our forest stands strong. More than 90 percent of our land is covered by rainforest. **“Your eyes have never seen so much green!”** Suriname is one of the three carbon-negative countries on Earth.

Since 1992, our forest has absorbed nearly 290 million tons of carbon, and each year we capture more than we emit, and we want to keep it that way.

The protection and conservation of our forest has been a priority. We have been logging sustainably for decades and did so with the Sustainable Tropical Rainforest Management System developed in Suriname. An ecological approach to forestry.

Also, the Indigenous and Tribal communities protect the forest by their continued stewardship.

We are proud of the way we did it, but pride alone does not pay the bills and does not develop the Indigenous and Tribal communities.

Madam President,

We must not forget that these forests are in competition with the potential development of vast resources such as gold, diamond, bauxite and more.

We need to make difficult choices. We want to keep our forests coverage at a minimum of 90%, but **we cannot do it alone.**

The time has come for the world's largest emitters to share in this responsibility, not only with words, but with action, justice and finance.

Suriname strongly calls for global action: predictable climate finance for high-forested, low-deforestation countries; fair recognition of real carbon removals; and direct support for the communities who live in and protect these forests.

Suriname, Madam President therefore endorses the initiative of the COP 30 Presidency to launch the **Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF)** and calls upon the international community to contribute to its success.

Madam President,

Suriname, as mentioned previously, takes pride in being an example of peaceful coexistence, having **different cultures**, religions, and the tradition to live together in respect and solidarity.

This is our gift to the world: the proof that harmony can prevail.

As stated upon our admission to the United Nations (UN) in 1975, our Republic indicated our willingness to engage with the international community.

Madam President, my country reiterates its strong commitment to multilateralism, one of humanity's most important achievements, which needs our protection in this time of change.

In closing, Aggression and military force should be replaced with peaceful resolutions and dialogue.

As a matter of urgency, I **call** on every member state to keep the peace, protect the planet and all human rights. Suriname has shown the world that living sustainably together is possible: **WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER!**

Thank you, Grantangi!