

Address By

His Excellency Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr.

President of the Republic of Liberia

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Theme: “Better Together: 80 Years and More for Peace, Development, and Human Rights”

Madam President;

Mr. Secretary-General;

Excellencies;

Distinguished Delegates:

I am honored to address this 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly on behalf of the people of Liberia. Eight decades after its founding, in which Liberia was involved, our country is proud that the United Nations remains the most critical multilateral platform for international cooperation and collective action. The UN continues to embody the best framework of humanity for peace, justice, security, dignity, and shared prosperity.

Madam President:

Please accept the congratulations from the Liberian delegation on your assumption of the esteemed office of President of the 80th Session of the General Assembly. We trust in your leadership to guide the affairs of this august body. We also extend our commendation to your predecessor for his stewardship of the 79th session and are grateful to the Secretary-General for his leadership.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates:

Please accept the gratitude of the Liberian Government and people for the overwhelming trust demonstrated by the General Assembly members in electing Liberia to serve on the Non-permanent seat of the United Nations Security Council for the 2026-2027 term. This marks Liberia's first full tenure on the UN Security Council, eighty years after the country signed the charter in the Herbst Theatre auditorium in San Francisco.

While the nameplate during this two-year term will read "Liberia", the seat, however, belongs to Africa. We are committed to ensuring that Liberia's contributions to the Security Council's discussions and decisions are shaped by our hard-earned experiences in conflict resolution, as well as our successes in peacebuilding, democratic reform, political transition, and governance.

Additionally, the collective experiences of the continent will be taken into consideration. Liberia looks forward to advocating for Africa's fair representation on the UN Security Council, which can only be achieved through permanent representation as a key part of the UN Security Council reform agenda.

Excellencies:

When the UN was founded in 1945, nations came together in the belief that peace could only be secured through cooperation. After two world wars, it became a widely held conviction that nations are stronger when united than when divided. Eighty years later, that conviction is being tested like never before. From wars and displacements to terrorism, threats to technological advances, climate change, and widening inequalities, today, our world faces challenges that no country can solve alone. At the same time, and paradoxically, when the world needs to strengthen multilateralism, its credibility and efficacy are being questioned.

As one of only four African countries to sign the Charter of the United Nations, Liberia feels morally obligated to call for a renewal—rather than a reversal— of multilateralism. Reversal of multilateralism is not an option for a just and peaceful world. We call for greater inclusion, effectiveness, and respect for international law, recognizing that the credibility of

the United Nations depends on our ability to act together in the service of humanity, rather than apart in the pursuit of narrow interests.

Madam President:

Wars in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa remind us that peace is often fragile and must be constantly defended. Therefore, as in 1945, Liberia once again reaffirms its commitment to dialogue, diplomacy, and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

In this spirit, Liberia supports all credible mediation efforts aimed at resolving the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Liberia stands on the common African position for the realization of the two-state solution, where Israelis and Palestinians can live side by side in peace and security, in accordance with international law and relevant UN Resolutions.

We call on the international community to act together and decisively to protect civilians, hold perpetrators of atrocities accountable, and strengthen mediation efforts. Rising from the ruins of civil war, Liberia knows all too well the human cost of conflict and the importance of peace. Since 2003, Liberia has experienced three peaceful and orderly democratic transitions, each marked by smooth transfers of power, making our nation safer, more stable, and more secure after over thirty years of unrest, instability, and destruction. Liberians have also worked hard to achieve this through multilateral cooperation, with support from ECOWAS, the African Union, and the United Nations.

Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

For Liberia, climate change is not a distant threat but a present reality. Rising seas are eroding our coasts, while storms and heavy rains devastate communities, threaten lives and livelihoods, and exacerbate food insecurity.

Yet we are acting. We are carrying out coastal defense projects, developing climate information systems for early warning systems, finalizing our carbon market policies, and advancing a blue economy strategy.

But our efforts alone are not enough. We urge urgent implementation of the Paris Agreement, full capitalization of the Loss and Damage Fund, and greater global investment in adaptation and mitigation. Above all, we call for Climate Justice—those who contribute the least to this crisis should not be forced to suffer the most.

Madam President, Excellencies:

Too many developing nations spend more on debt servicing than on health or education. The current international financial architecture is unresponsive to this reality, making it not only outdated, but also unjust and defiant of the objectives of shared prosperity and development, the pursuit of which the United Nations was also created.

Liberia, therefore, joins the Global South in calling for urgent reforms to the international financial architecture to ensure fair representation, a new approach to debt servicing, and financing that supports sustainable development. Shared prosperity requires a system that truly leaves no nation behind.

Excellencies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

At home, inclusive development remains our top priority. To this end, our government has launched the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development, which focuses on:

- Agriculture and Food Security
- Roads and Infrastructure
- Rule of Law and Good Governance
- Education and Skills Development
- Sanitation and Health
- Tourism, Technology and Innovation

The Arrest Agenda aligns with our National Vision 2030, which aims to transform Liberia into a lower-middle-income country and lay the foundation for a capable state by 2030. Through this agenda, we are committed to improving livelihoods, reducing inequality, and ensuring that every Liberian benefits from the dividends of peace and development.

We are taking tangible steps to improve governance. By implementing accountability and anti-corruption measures, such as asset declarations, we are strengthening institutional capacity to promote integrity, transparency, and improved public service delivery.

Liberia has endured some of the darkest chapters of human suffering, having experienced one of the most brutal civil conflicts in recent history. Over the past two decades, we have remained firmly on the path of recovery—working to heal our nation and rebuild from the painful legacy of war.

My government has taken deliberate and meaningful steps toward national reconciliation. These include honoring the memory of the victims, supporting initiatives for memorialization, and upholding our commitment to justice and the rule of law.

While we recognize that these efforts are complex and challenging, they are essential steps toward achieving lasting peace and genuine national healing.

May I now take the opportunity to renew my government's request for international support and assistance in establishing a War and Economic Crimes Court, which will further the Liberian people's aspiration for national healing and reconciliation through justice.

Madam President:

For the United Nations to remain relevant and practical, it must adapt. Liberia, therefore, supports the Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact. We also call for a UN that's more responsive and reflective of today's world. Using outdated 1945 solutions to tackle 2025 challenges is neither reasonable nor realistic.

Regarding the Sustainable Development Goals, we agree that our collective progress is too slow. However, reaching the SDG targets remains as vital as ever. We, therefore, urge that the timely achievement of the SDGs be treated as a global emergency. Consequently, Liberia will submit its next Voluntary National Review in 2026, committing to accelerate the implementation of the global goals in line with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and ECOWAS' Vision 2050.

Finally, Excellencies:

The theme of this session, "Better Together," aptly captures both the spirit and the urgency of our time. The challenges before us are immense. So, too, must be our collective capacity to overcome them.

Liberia pledges to remain a bridge to peace, a development partner, and a defender of human rights.

Over the next 80 years, we will continue to honor the promise of 1945 by renewing our commitment to a world where peace is just, development is inclusive, and dignity is universal.

Thank you.