



STATEMENT BY
H.E. MR. DANNY FAURE
PRESIDENT
OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES
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President of the General Assembly,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to join those who spoke before me in congratulating Your Excellency, Mr Miroslav Lajcak (pronounced as MIH-roh-slahv L-EYE -chahk), on your election as President of this 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly.

I would also like to thank His Excellency, Ambassador Peter Thomson, for making the small island developing states and the rest of the international community proud by his strong leadership of the 71st session.

Mr. President,

May I start by saying that the thoughts of the Government and people of Seychelles go out to the millions of people in South Asia, Africa, the United States, and Mexico, and our island brothers and sisters in the Caribbean who have suffered unimaginable losses from floods, hurricanes and other forms of extreme weather these past months.

We urge the international community to not only respond generously to these countries' calls for support, but to take far more seriously the need to upscale the urgent action required to prevent, prepare for, adapt to and recover from such increasingly destructive climate-related disasters.

Mr. President,

Events around the world today sadly show that the theme of this year's General Debate, "Focusing on people: striving for peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet", cannot be achieved without effective implementation of the principles of democracy and a concerted demonstration of will. This calls for good governance, transparency and accountability which are the foundation for the prosperity and security of a nation. Indeed, they put the rights and aspirations of the people at the centre of development where prosperity is shared by all.

We must create the necessary space within society where diverging views and ideas can flourish and be respected. Doing so helps promote unity, tolerance and respect in the population.

Mr President,

Seychelles is, for the first time in its history, experiencing a system of political cohabitation where I as President and the head of the executive arm am working with a legislature dominated by the Opposition.

When I first addressed our legislature, the National Assembly, almost a year ago last October, I gave it my word we would work together to deliver a better future for our people.

Our cohabitation is working well.

There is a new working environment; one in which there is dialogue, and one where we consult. And most importantly, one based on mutual respect.

We are reshaping Government, making it more inclusive and we are empowering our citizens, especially our youth, giving them equal opportunities to play important roles in the development of our country and the growth of our economy. In this context, we are improving the environment for free media to play a vital role in nation building efforts.

Together with the National Assembly, we are amending legislation relating to institutions, authorities and agencies to ensure they reflect the new principles of good governance. With greater transparency, good governance and accountability, the independence of institutions and authorities will continue to increase. They are the bedrock of our society.

We are writing a new chapter in Seychelles; where we work together to overcome our challenges and show respect for all opinions in the interest of a Seychelles that unites all of us despite our differences.

This openness and policy of discourse is at the core of my nation's willingness to secure a bold future for our people. I believe that Small Island Developing States such as mine are the moral barometers for what is right.

We do not shy from accepting and learning from others experiences but in this regard, we also have valuable lessons to share with others.

The path that we are charting in our country can serve as an example for all for the sake of tolerance and a globally lasting peace.

Monsieur le Président,

Tel est notre expérience aux Seychelles.

Mais lorsque nous regardons autour de nous que voyons-nous ? Nous constatons que l'instabilité s'installe, à l'échelle nationale et régionale. Et cela est une entrave à la paix et à une vie décente et durable pour les populations.

Nous estimons que ces facteurs sont au cœur de la crise mondiale des réfugiés. Un problème qui risque de s'empirer encore, en raison des mouvements croissants de populations dus au changement climatique.

Monsieur le Président,

Une économie mondiale globalisée exige que nous agissions en tant que régions organisées afin de nous donner les meilleures chances de transformer nos espoirs en améliorations tangibles de la qualité de vie de nos populations, par le biais du renforcement des valeurs de démocratie et de bonne gouvernance.

Et cela s'applique également à notre auguste institution : je veux dire l'Organisation des Nations Unies. En effet, après 25 ans, oui, après un quart de siècle de réformes et de contre-réformes du Conseil de sécurité, il est grand temps d'écouter l'appel assourdissant des 164 membres de l'ONU pour des réformes réelles et justes.

Ce serait une façon de répondre aux accusations selon lesquelles l'Organisation des Nations Unies n'est qu'une simple chambre de longs bavardages, et nous pratiquerons par la même occasion ce que nous prêchons.

Mr. President,

For there to be peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet, it is not enough just to throw more resources - financial, human and others - into implementing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

All these processes should be democratically governed, underpinned by transparency and accountability along the way, and in harmony with, and with respect for the natural environment in which we live.

In Seychelles, the private sector, civil society, NGOs and parliamentarians have joined with the public sector in a national effort to integrate the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals into our country's budget and development plans. Together we are drafting a new national development strategy and a more sustainable national development plan for Seychelles for the next 15 years called Vision 2032.

This exercise also includes the integration of Africa Agenda 2063 and the Samoa Pathway for small island developing states.

Mr. President,

The same inclusive approach applies to stepping up our implementation of the Paris Agreement in the light of recent developments. According to the latest science, all stakeholders need to be involved if the international community is to drastically scale up our collective climate action to achieve our targets.

There is something I said at the COP22 climate summit in Marrakech last November that holds true even more so today as we head into COP23 led by our fellow small island developing state of Fiji supported by Germany.

Referring to the Paris Agreement, I said, and I quote, "For the very first time in history, a global climate change deal, giving renewed hope to the world, has been reached.

We find ourselves at a crossroads and cannot afford to renege on our collective commitment to travel the moral path for the sake of humanity.”

Mr. President,

From small islands come big ideas. Last year Seychelles reached an agreement with the Paris Club as well as others on a first-of-its-kind US\$21 million debt-for-adaptation swap to protect 30% of our 1.37-million-square-kilometre exclusive economic zone, partly as ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change.

Also, we aim to launch the world's first blue bonds by the end of this year to raise another US\$15 million for sustainable fishing practices in our waters. Both these measures seek to establish innovative sources of financing to implement sustainable development goal 14 on oceans and seas and other interlinked SDGs as part of developing the Seychelles blue economy.

We thank our many partners at home and abroad who have helped us on this bold and exciting new path to sustainable development and resilience to climate change, and who continue to be actively involved.

In closing Mr. President, I would like to congratulate Fiji and Sweden for the great success of The Ocean Conference in June and its Call for Action.

As President of a large ocean developing state, I would like to reiterate Seychelles' commitment to continue playing a pioneering role in finding innovative ways to respond to the Call for Action and implement SDG14 as an integral part of all the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

On this positive note, Mr. President, I thank you all.