

Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov's Remarks at the General Debate of the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly

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Below is a full transcript of Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov's statement at the UNGA on September 28, 2024. Taken from the [official website of the MoFA](#).

Dear Mr President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

A few days ago, this building hosted a forum called the Summit of the Future. Russia was supportive of the idea of the Secretary-General to convene it, since the crisis of our Organisation is deepening and something needs to be done about this. We devoted our efforts to preparing the summit. However, we were realistic in our expectations. There have been many ambitious events in the modern history of the United Nations which ended up with loud declarations which were soon forgotten.

The Millenium Summit proclaimed the goal to "free the peoples from the scourge of war". Two years later the United States of America, at the head of the coalition of the willing, invaded Iraq - the country which has yet to get over the devastating consequences of this affair - under a ridiculous pretext, without the mandate of the UN Security Council.

The 2005 World Summit declared its commitment to establishing a just peace in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. But this sacred commitment did not prevent the United States and its allies from emboldening Georgia's then-leader Mikheil Saakashvili to launch an armed aggression against the people of South Ossetia and Russian peacekeepers in 2008. Three years later, NATO orchestrated a military intervention in Libya that destroyed its statehood and undermined the stability of neighbouring countries.

In 2015, the UN Summit on Sustainable Development adopted grandiose plans to fight poverty and inequality. In the end, they turned out to be empty promises in the face of the unwillingness of Western countries to give up their neo-colonial practices of siphoning off the riches of the world for their own benefit. You can simply look at the statistics to see how many promises to fund development in the global south and transfer environmentally

friendly technologies have actually been kept.



The current UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, just like Kofi Annan and Ban Ki-moon before him, has put forward an initiative under the slogan of a new start for global cooperation. This is a wonderful idea. Who could disagree? But what global cooperation is there to talk about, when the West has trampled all those unshakeable values of the globalisation that speakers on the podium talked so much about, trying to convince us that they would give everyone equal access to the goods of modern civilisation? Where is the inviolability of property, the presumption of innocence, freedom of expression, access to information, fair competition in markets under fair and constant rules? The Secretary-General speaks of global cooperation at the very moment when the countries of the West have unleashed a veritable war of sanctions against more than half, if not the majority, of the countries of the world, and the US dollar, promoted as an asset and a good for all humanity, has been crudely turned into a weapon.

Cuba has been subject to a trade blockade for more than sixty years, while the overwhelming majority of members of the international community have called for it to be lifted. In its pursuit of an increasingly unattainable goal of maintaining its dominance, Washington has blocked the normal work of the WTO to settle disputes and a reform of the Bretton Woods institutions, whose structure has long ceased to reflect the real balance of power in the world economy and finance. The UN wants to turn the West into a tool to promote its own selfish ends. The Summit of the Future showed that the number of attempts to blur the intergovernmental nature of the organisation has increased. The long-awaited changes in the way the Secretariat is staffed, with key positions in fact occupied and inherited by representatives of the Western minority, have been curtailed. When the Secretary-General calls for a new approach to global cooperation, the Secretariat must promote unifying ideas, propose options for compromise, rather than find excuses to integrate pro-Western narratives into the work of the United Nations.

It is not late to breathe new life into the United Nations. But this can be achieved through restoration of trust based on the charter principle – sovereign equality of all states – rather than out-of-touch summits and declarations. However, while the trust is undermined, including through actions by the West to create its subordinate narrow formats to resolve crucial issues bypassing the UN such as control over the Internet or determination of legal frameworks to use AI technologies. These issues touch upon the future of the entire humanity and they have to be considered on a universal basis, without discrimination and aspiration to achieve unilateral benefits. Thus, everything has to be agreed on a fair basis involving all UN members, and not like how the Pact for the Future was drafted: without a single plenary round of talks where all countries would be present. Instead, the work was

done under the control of western manipulators. As a result, the Pact, already swelled the ranks of declarations written in beautiful English without even being born.

The situation is no better when it comes to implementing the binding resolutions of the UN Security Council. It is enough to mention the sabotage of the resolutions on the Kosovo settlement and the Dayton Accords on Bosnia and Herzegovina. The most egregious example is the postponement for more than 80 years of consensus resolutions on the establishment of an independent Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel.

Image: Photo released by the Israeli military from the events of October 7, 2023. (Photo: Israeli Defense Forces)



Acts of terrorism which Israelis fell victim to on October 7, 2023 cannot be justified. But all those who are still capable of compassion resent the fact that the October tragedy is being used for a massive collective punishment of the Palestinians, which has turned out to be an unprecedented humanitarian disaster. The murder of Palestinian civilians by US weapons must stop. The delivery of humanitarian cargoes to the enclave must be ensured, the restoration of infrastructure must be arranged and, most importantly, the implementation of the legitimate right of self-determination of the Palestinians must be guaranteed, and they must be allowed to establish a territorially integral and viable state within the borders of 1967 with its capital in East Jerusalem, not in words but in deeds, “on the ground”.

Another blatant example of the use of terrorist methods to achieve political goals is the attack on Lebanon, in which civilian technology was turned into a deadly weapon. This crime must be investigated immediately. It is already impossible to ignore the numerous publications in the media, including in Europe and the United States, which prove the various levels of Washington’s involvement and, at the very least, its awareness of the preparation of a terrorist attack. We understand that the Americans always deny everything and do their best to erase the emerging facts – just as they did in response to irrefutable evidence of their involvement in terrorist acts against the Nord Stream pipelines. These pipelines, by the way, were a great example of the global cooperation of which the UN Secretary-General dreams. After their destruction, the competitiveness of the European Union in the global economy has been undermined for many years to the benefit of the United States. The West is to blame for concealing the truth about the organisers of many other heinous crimes, including a bloody provocation in Bucha, a city in the Kiev region, in 2022, and a series of poisonings of Russian citizens in the UK and Germany.

The UN Secretariat cannot remain aloof from efforts to establish the truth in situations that

directly affect global security and must act impartially in accordance with Art. 100 of the Charter, acting impartially and avoiding the temptation to play into the hands of certain states, especially those who openly call for the world to be divided into a flowering garden and a jungle, or for a democratic table to be set for dinner and those on the menu instead of cooperation.

The 'track record' of those who demand that the rest of the world play by their rules should not be forgotten. The invasion of Afghanistan and the inglorious twenty-year presence of a well-known coalition there was accompanied by the emergence of al-Qaeda. The creation of the Islamic State was a direct result of the aggression against Iraq. The start of the war in Syria gave birth to Jabhat al-Nusra (now Hayat Tahrir al-Sham), and the destruction of Libya opened the floodgates for terrorism in the Sahara-Sahel region and for millions of illegal immigrants in Europe. We urge all those who care about the future of their countries and people to be extremely cautious about the new plots of the inventors of these very rules.

Methods of political assassination, such as the one that took place yesterday in [Beirut](#), which have almost become common practice, are of the utmost concern.

The tragic and unacceptable developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict, in Yemen, in the waters of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, in Sudan and in other danger zones in Africa reflect an undeniable fact: security can either be equal and inseparable for all, or there will be no security for anyone.

For years, Russia has been trying to make Washington, London and Brussels, overwhelmed by their own complexes of exclusivity and impunity, understand this seemingly simple truth in the context of European security. Although they initially promised not to expand NATO, and in 1999 and 2020 they left their signatures in official documents of OSCE summits under the obligation not to ensure their own security at the expense of others, in fact the North Atlantic Alliance has been carrying out geopolitical and military expansion in Europe for three decades, trying to establish its positions in the Trans-Caucasian region and Central Asia, creating direct threats to the security of our country. The same situation is happening in the Asia-Pacific region, where NATO's infrastructure is creeping in and where military and political blocs are being created, undermining the inclusive security architecture under the auspices of ASEAN, in order to contain the People's Republic of China and Russia.

At the same time, the West not only fails to seek the global cooperation called for by our Secretary-General, but in its doctrinal documents openly and harshly accuses Russia, China, Belarus, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran of creating threats to its dominance. The goal of the strategic defeat of Russia is declared there: just as London and Washington did in May 1945, when (before the end of the Second World War) they developed Operation Unthinkable to destroy the Soviet Union. This was kept a deep secret, but today's Anglo-Saxon strategists do not hide their intentions. However, they expect to defeat Russia through an illegitimate neo-Nazi Kiev Regime, however they prepare Europe to fall in this suicidal affair. I will not dwell on the futility and danger of the very idea of trying to fight Russia's nuclear power to victory.

Equally meaningless are the chants of Kiev's Western masters that the infamous peace formula is the only viable basis for peace talks. Just as they support this doomed ultimatum, the West unreservedly invokes the UN Charter, which demands that Ukraine's territorial integrity be guaranteed.

I would like to remind colleagues in the UN Secretariat, among others, that the Charter is not only about territorial integrity. The very first chapter of the Charter proclaims the obligation to respect the principle of equality and self-determination of peoples. This served as the international legal basis for the process of decolonisation (which is still ongoing, despite the opposition of the French, the British and other former colonial powers). And in 1970, the General Assembly unanimously decided in its Declaration that everyone must respect the territorial integrity of those states whose governments respect the right of peoples to self-determination and thus represent the entire population living in the territory concerned. I would like to stress that this was a unanimous decision of the UN General Assembly after many years of complicated discussions. There is no need to prove that the Ukrainian neo-Nazis, who seized power in Kiev in February 2014 after a bloody coup supported by the United States and its allies, never represented the Russian population of Crimea, Donbass and Novorossiia.

The Western leaders, who are obsessed with the topic of human rights at every given opportunity, pointedly remain silent about these rights in relation to racist actions of their Kiev clients. In light of this forgetfulness I would like to remind another requirement of the very first article of the UN Charter: to respect the rights and fundamental freedoms of any person regardless of their race, gender, language and religion. The rights of Russians and people associated with the Russian culture have been methodically eradicated following a coup in Kiev. The Russian language has been prohibited in all spheres on a legislative level – education, media, culture, and even everyday life. Another law banning the canonic Ukrainian Orthodox Church has been adopted recently. These gross violations of rights of Russians enshrined in the UN Charter, along with threats to security of Russia and entire Europe which comes from the Kiev regime and all those who pull it into NATO, are prime causes of the current Ukrainian crisis. The special military operation, which Russia is carrying out to protect its security, the present and the future of the people on their indigenous land, is aimed at eliminating them.

Image: Joining forces: The International Legion of Territorial Defense of Ukraine has enabled thousands of foreign volunteers to join the fight against the Russian invaders. Image: Mil.gov.ua / Wikimedia Commons



We value the genuine aspiration of the entire range of our partners to promote mediation initiatives for the very best of reasons. We respect their constructive commitment to results as opposed to the dead-end peace formula of Volodymyr Zelensky. We encourage our friends to take the above-mentioned facts of the real causes of the present situation fully into consideration in their further efforts. No peace on the basis of the UN Charter is possible unless they are eliminated. The realistic settlement plan was set forth by President Vladimir Putin on [June 14](#), when he once again convincingly demonstrated the good will of Russia to achieve negotiation agreements whose prospects were dropped by Kiev and its mentors following the 2014 coup, failure to comply with 2015 Minsk Agreements and 2022 Istanbul

Agreements.

The unprecedented level of hypocrisy and aggressiveness of the western policy against Russia not only brings to naught the idea of global cooperation promoted by the Secretary General but even more so blocks the functioning of the entire global control systems, including the Security Council. This is not our choice, we are not to be blamed for the consequences of such a dangerous course. But everyone will feel the high cost if the West does not stop.

It is obvious for the world majority that confrontation and hegemonism do not solve a single global problem. They just artificially restrain the impartial process of forming a multipolar world order which will rest on the equality of rights of big and small nations, respect the value of a human person, equality of men and women, right of the people to determine their own fate themselves. All of these is a quote from the UN Charter. Just as a principle of non-interference with internal affairs of sovereign states, whose restatement, to the shame of the UN members, was blocked by the US and their satellites at the very summit of the future during the adoption of a corresponding pact.

Addressing the participants of the IV Fourth Eurasian Women's Forum in St Petersburg on September 18, this year, President Vladimir Putin stressed the need to unite efforts in the name of stable development and universal equal and inseparable security. It is possible to resolve the most complicated issues which the entire humanity faced only in cooperation, with due account of each other's interests. The West must realise this and break its neo-colonial habits.

The Global South and East speak out their rights to full-fledged participation in decision-making processes all over the spectrum of the international agenda louder and louder – which becomes more relevant in the situation when the West systemically destroys the globalization model it created.

The role of intergovernmental associations in Asia, Africa and Latin America becomes more important. They include, among others, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the African Union, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Arab League, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Regional integration structures are building contacts both among themselves and the regional association – BRICS, which allows harmonising approaches to agree on the mechanisms of mutually beneficial cooperation and development beyond the control of negative internal impact and dictate.

All these impartial processes will have to be taken into account in the work of the G20, where the Group of Seven can no longer call the shots.

Ways of ensuring security in different regions will have to be reconsidered, drawing lessons from the bitter experience of the functioning of NATO-oriented or Euro-Atlantic security models, which the West has exploited for its expansionist intentions.

Russia has launched an initiative to create an inclusive architecture of equal and inseparable security in Eurasia, open – I would like to emphasise – to all states and organisations of our common continent, ready to work together in the search for universally acceptable solutions, using the interdependence and natural competitive advantages of the

unified Eurasian space. An international conference will be devoted to this topic in Minsk, starting on 31 October.

We are not fencing off dialogue with the West. Last July, at Russia's suggestion, the Security Council held open debates on building a fairer and more stable world order. We believe it is important to continue the discussion, both in the UN and in other fora.

A more equitable world order unconditionally presupposes increased representation of the Global South in the UN Security Council. We reaffirm our position in support of Brazil and India provided a positive decision is reached in the framework of the well-known initiatives of the African Union. At the same time, of course, there can be no talk of additional seats for Western countries, which are already excessively over-represented in the Security Council.

May 2025 will mark the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War, during which tens of millions of people, including 27 million citizens of all the peoples of the Soviet Union, fell victim to the genocidal policy of the Third Reich. Such crimes have no statute of limitations, as there is no moral justification for those who try to prove the innocence of Nazi torturers, collaborators and their current successors in Ukraine, the Baltic States, Canada and other countries.

The world faces massive challenges which require united efforts rather than confrontation and desire of global domination.

Russia will always be on the side of collective work, truth and law, peace and cooperation in the interests of reviving the ideals laid down by the founding fathers. This is the aim of the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations, established on the initiative of Venezuela. Its objectives and principles remain fully relevant. The main thing is that everyone, without exception, respects these principles, not selectively (choosing from the menu), but in their entirety and interconnectedness, including the principle of the sovereign equality of States. Then, while working for the honest balance of the legitimate national interests of all countries, we can bring to life the purpose of the UN as stated in the Charter: "to be a centre for the co-ordination of the activities of nations in the achievement of these common purposes".

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