

Minister Osman Saleh's Remarks On United Nations Day



□

Distinguished colleagues,

Members of the diplomatic community and the UN family,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honor to join you in commemorating United Nations Day.

We gather at a time when international cooperation faces unprecedented challenges—geopolitical tensions, selective accountability, and unfulfilled commitments. Multilateralism, centered around the United Nations, has yet to fulfill its founding promise: to save humanity from war and promote social progress and better living standards in “larger freedom.”

Despite decades of effort, we are still far from eradicating poverty, ending preventable deaths, and safeguarding our planet. Peace remains a privilege for a few, while inequality deepens, testing our collective sense of justice and fairness.

Disillusionment with multilateral institutions is growing. Many now question whether these structures, intended to address global inequalities, have instead perpetuated unfair hierarchies rooted in colonialism.

Eritrea believes that the UN remains an indispensable platform for global cooperation—if it embraces meaningful reform and a new approach.

First, we must uphold the core principles of the UN Charter: respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference. These principles must guide both actions and words. When violated, the global community must respond decisively to rebuild trust and ensure cooperation. This is especially true of unilateral economic measures that are illegal and undermine international cooperation. The UN must advocate for an end to actions that violate international law and hinder development.



Second, reform of the UN and other multilateral institutions is urgent. This message was strongly echoed during the recent General Assembly. Outdated and undemocratic systems limit progress, reinforcing injustice and marginalization across the world. It is concerning that the Security Council's focus remains disproportionately on Africa, even though only a small share of global conflicts occurs on the continent. To make matters worse, Africa's call for a more representative Council has been ignored. Moreover, the UN's development efforts must align with the priorities of host states and respect their leadership.

Third, the impartiality of UN staff is essential. Structural reform alone is not enough. UN personnel must act as neutral stewards of the Charter, free from national or ideological biases. Impartiality is the foundation of the organization's credibility, enabling it to mediate fairly and foster lasting cooperation among nations. However, over the past three decades, the UN has increasingly embraced Western interpretations of development, peace, and human rights. In an era of global transitions and diverse centers of power, the ability of UN staff to embody

the spirit of an international civil servant will be crucial to the organization's future.



Dear colleagues,

Since its independence, despite relentless external hostility and limited resources, Eritrea has made strides in creating a peaceful, harmonious, and prosperous nation—a nation where the fruits of development, however big or small, are shared by all its citizens.

In recent years, the Government of Eritrea has been scaling up efforts to propel economic growth and address bottlenecks to the country's socio-economic development and transformation. These challenges include limited industrialization and value addition, insufficient investment in strategic and emerging industries, underdeveloped agriculture, low competitiveness of Eritrean goods and services, poor infrastructure, and high business costs caused by inadequate energy supply.

Addressing these bottlenecks requires mechanizing agriculture through large-scale irrigation schemes across the country, improving transport infrastructure to facilitate the faster movement of goods and services while reducing business costs, investing in skill development to enhance the capabilities of the Eritrean people, harnessing natural resources such as oil, gas, minerals, land, and water to drive further growth, and accelerating industrialization along with value addition.

These issues have shaped—and will continue to shape—our diplomatic engagements at bilateral, regional, and international levels. We are focusing on infrastructure projects with transformative economic impacts, particularly in production and industrialization. Additionally, we are prioritizing the development of renewable energy and the promotion of value addition.



In this regard, I wish to thank all of you for your collaboration and reiterate our readiness to work together with the UN system. I acknowledge that challenges and weaknesses may arise, and we are committed to addressing them.

Let me conclude, by stressing the need to build a multilateral system rooted in trust, justice, and solidarity—one grounded in the Charter and applied equally to all, without exception. If we fail, fewer people and nations will look to the UN to address global and regional challenges.

Eritrea stands ready to work with all nations and partners to ensure the UN lives up to its founding ideals and remains a force for peace, equality, and shared progress.

Thank you, and happy UN Day.

Oct 25, 2024