

United Nations General Assembly

25 September 2023 -

News

The 78th United Nations General Assembly (#UNGA78), the annual meeting of the Plenary Body of the United Nations, took place in New York from 18 to 22 September 2023. The representatives of the 193 Member States gathered to discuss international issues in line with the [UN Charter](#).

Each year, the Council adopts the EU's priorities in the context of the United Nations and the UN General Assembly, which guide the EU's work in the year ahead. The **overall priorities till September 2024** are:

- Accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals
- Strengthening global governance in line with the UN Secretary-General's proposals on the "common agenda"
- Building global partnerships.

The **EU's commitments** at the New York Summit, as [outlined in the 15 September 2023](#) press release, included the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell and other European Commissioners.

On the first day of the **Sustainable Development Goals Summit**, the [President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen](#) delivered a speech representing the European Union on the topic of aid to developing countries for the implementation of the [UN 2030 Agenda](#), described as "*our overall roadmap for achieving sustainable development and overcoming the multiple crises we are facing.*"

Aware that the full achievement of the 17 Goals of the Agenda is at risk, Von der Leyen recalled EU Member States' commitment and the further actions that need to be taken to ensure full and timely implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including through strengthened global governance and global partnerships, multilateral development banks, EU support in the creation of national green bonds, the European [Global Gateway](#) initiative (EUR 300 billion, over five years, for the green and digital transition, for investments in education and health in developing countries, partly using public resources, reducing the financial risk of private investment in developing countries), accepting the Secretary General's proposed plan "[SDG stimulus](#)".

The [President of the European Council, Charles Michel](#), spoke on behalf of the EU in the **general debate**.

Among many topics, the President spoke about Europe's commitment to a multipolar world and Europe's support in Russia's war against Ukraine. He addressed the issue of pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, with a call for the completion of negotiations in the World Health Organisation by May 2024. He also spoke about the importance of reforming the financial system, the need to make it more effective and fairer towards developing countries, and the consequent reform of multilateral development banks.

Another central theme was climate change, which takes up the examination of the 17 objectives of the [UN Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), in order to pursue the goal of making Europe climate-neutral, i.e. carbon-neutral, by 2050.

[Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni](#) spoke **on behalf of Italy** before the General Assembly, focussing on some of the issues that Italy will put at the centre of its G7 Presidency in 2024, the same issues and challenges that fall within the UN scope of activity.

For more details:

[General Assembly 2023](#)

[Europe's priorities at the 78th UN General Assembly](#)

[UN Permanent Representation of Italy](#)

[European Council – Council of the European Union](#)

[Speech by President Meloni at the 78th UN General Assembly](#)

[Europe's commitment to the SDGs at the 78th UN General Assembly – ASVIS](#)

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