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Belgium at the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly

On 9 September 2025, the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA80) kicked off with the theme “Better together: 80 years and beyond for peace, development and human rights”. However, this anniversary edition is overshadowed by the geopolitical crisis and a multilateralism under pressure.

Traditionally, the proceedings of the United Nations General Assembly begin with the so-called High Level Week, attended by heads of state and government and numerous ministers and diplomats. It is the annual high mass of world politics and diplomacy, an excellent opportunity for bilateral meetings and contacts with countries from all corners of the world.

A Belgian delegation, led by Prime Minister De Wever, will travel to New York for High Level Week, which starts on Tuesday 23 September.

Prime Minister Bart De Wever will be in New York from Monday 22 to Thursday 25 September. During his visit, he will deliver the Belgian statement in the general debate of the General Assembly, meet with the UN Secretary-General and open the Belgian event on organised crime. His programme also includes events aimed at promoting Belgian leadership in areas such as energy, logistics, health and innovation, with a strong emphasis on transatlantic partnerships.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Development Cooperation Maxime Prévot is travelling to New York as a member of the delegation with a clear mission: Belgium wants to make a difference in the major international issues currently on the table. Specifically, there are three priorities: more humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza and political progress towards a two-state solution, continued support for the peace process in Ukraine, and the protection of the International Criminal Court as a cornerstone in the fight against impunity. He will also take part in international meetings on women's rights, climate, sustainable development and the financing of international cooperation. These issues directly affect our collective security and prosperity. Minister Prévot will also hold a series of bilateral meetings. In New York, he will meet partners from North Africa, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Minister of Justice and North Sea Annelies Verlinden will also be part of the Belgian delegation. Her participation has two objectives. Firstly, she will play an active role in promoting the Belgian campaign to host the secretariat of BBNJ (the treaty on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction) in Brussels. As part of this effort, she will attend various events, such as “*A Nice High Seas Treaty – from Celebration to Action*”, co-sponsored by Belgium, and give a keynote speech at the “*High Tea for the High Seas*” organised by Belgium. Secondly, she will participate in a series of events and bilateral meetings to strengthen international judicial cooperation and highlight the collective fight against organised crime and drug trafficking. These include a visit to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Belgian side event “*Tackling Organised Crime through International Cooperation and Innovation*”, organised in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Her Majesty the Queen will also participate in the 80th session of the General Assembly in her capacity as advocate of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. She will meet with Secretary-General António Guterres, Deputy Secretary-General and Chair of the Sustainable Development Group Amina

Mohammed, and officials from various specialised UN agencies, including Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher, and High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi. During her stay in New York, the Queen will take part in several working meetings. Among other things, she will speak on behalf of Belgium on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on women's rights. She will also attend a meeting of the international coalition for the return of Ukrainian children and a reception hosted by former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's foundation, dedicated to current challenges in education.

Multilateralism remains the backbone of our foreign policy. Despite increasing geopolitical tensions and divisions in the international community, our country has chosen to continue investing in a world order based on rules and agreements. Respect for human rights, international humanitarian law and UN Security Council resolutions are central to this. Belgium thus wishes to contribute to a world order in which cooperation and dialogue take precedence over polarisation and conflict.

Our country continues to profile itself as a reliable partner within the multilateral system. Through international cooperation, we focus on targeted and high-quality investments that have a direct impact on the lives of people worldwide, such as health, climate, sustainable food systems, stability and humanitarian aid. These are issues that not only determine the future of vulnerable regions, but are also directly linked to security and prosperity in Belgium and Europe.

Belgium is committed to flexible and multi-year financing partnerships. This makes our support predictable and strengthens the functioning of the UN system. To illustrate: almost 70% of UN resources are currently used to respond to development and humanitarian needs.

In New York, two conflicts will inevitably dominate the agenda: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the war in Ukraine.

Belgium is participating in the conference on the two-state solution, chaired by France and Saudi Arabia. Together with Jordan and the European Commission, our country is organising a *'Call to Action for Palestinian Children in the West Bank and Gaza'* with a specific focus on the protection of children in this humanitarian crisis.

Support for Ukraine also remains a priority. Our country is participating in the fifth summit of the Crimea Platform, which focuses on international cooperation on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

In addition to the current crises, the UN is also celebrating milestones this week, including those related to women's rights, climate and sustainable development. An assessment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is being made, with five years to go until the 2030 deadline. At the same time, Belgium recognises that the UN system is under severe pressure. Reforms are necessary to bring it more in line with today's reality and to safeguard the credibility of multilateral institutions.

Belgium is using the High Level Week not only to discuss global challenges, but also to use its presence in New York to meet bilaterally with other Member States, UN agencies, representatives of the private sector and civil society. This serves to strengthen existing ties and establish new partnerships, including in Central Asia and Latin America.

This is how Belgium intends to fulfil its diplomatic role in concrete terms: by building bridges and

establishing tangible partnerships that contribute to a just and stable world order.

You can follow the General Debate and various events live on [Live Schedule | UN Web TV](#).

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