

**VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR PHILEMON  
YANG, CAMEROON'S CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE  
79TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

1. Once elected, I will be expected to perform my functions as President of the United Nations General Assembly for a one-year period that is from September 2024 to September 2025 inclusive.
2. What are my vision, my programme, my duty and my style? These are the very first questions which Member States and even the public at large will expect me to shed light on, as per the prescriptions of the Assembly.

### **MY VISION**

3. I will place my tenure under the theme: **"Unity in diversity, for the advancement of peace, sustainable development and human dignity for everyone everywhere"**, which, I believe, covers the three pillars of the United Nations.
4. Indeed, my reading of the current international context and its likely developments is that the challenges of this digital 21st century, marked by tremendous progress of Science, Technique and Technology, in particular Information and Communication Technologies, are becoming more and more complex and globalized.
5. These challenges result from human activity or natural disasters. They are currently reflected, among others, by open or latent conflicts in various regions of the world, geopolitical tensions, international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, economic upheavals and uncertainties, inequalities, epidemics, pandemics, refugees and displaced persons, migratory flows, climate change which is threatening the survival and the very existence of some States, deforestation, desertification, hunger, the digital divide and unbridled arms race, including in space.
6. I believe we have the requisite tools to address these issues as asserted by Heads of State and Government in the Declaration on the Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations. What we lack is the political will to act, to use these tools for the well-being of all. Currently, there is a lingering mistrust, double standard and isolationism by States. Increasingly, positions are being taken and things done, not according to the "Charter", but rather "à la carte", that is, using a variable geometry approach and based on partisan interests.
7. Yet, no country, however powerful it may be, can single-handedly address the current challenges of globalization and interdependence. I note with interest the existence, the assertion and even the creation of various groupings and poles in the world. However, I do not believe such approach has the potential or even the actual capacity for action of the United Nations.
8. The General Assembly, the highest deliberative body and the most representative at the global level, is thus becoming the lone forum where, based on sovereign equality, States in their

diverse opinions meet to jointly seek solutions to these issues. It is the forum par excellence for the free expression of such diverse convictions, opinions, interests, approaches, solutions and ways and means of implementation.

9. It is the place where, thanks to the General Debate, the voices of Peoples and Nations, in all their particularities, are heard through their representatives regarding peace, security, disarmament, economic, financial, social and humanitarian issues, administrative and budgetary issues, human rights, rule of law, the preparation and dissemination of international law, decolonization, space, seas and oceans, or peace-keeping and peace-building operations and reforms concerning the future of humanity. The General Assembly mirrors the richness of peoples and nations of the world.
10. It is also an ideal forum for dialogue and consultation where big and small nations seek common ground to achieve their common goals, harmonize their views on all these issues, hence the appeal for unity, oneness, solidarity, in fact consensus during deliberations and discussions within the various bodies, transcending differences, and divergent and wavering opinions.
11. In a nutshell, such is my vision of the August Assembly designed by the founding fathers as a forum for free opinion, a great drum that gives voice to peoples and nations, and also as a great Palaver Tree under which, following multiple hearings, views are harmonized to reach common goals. It is in this light that I would like my action to be viewed during my tenure.

### **MY PROGRAMME, MY DUTY**

12. To that end, and as a guideline, it should be underscored that Member States have themselves defined the eight major areas or priorities that the General Assembly should cover, namely: promotion of sustainable economic growth and development following the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly; maintenance of international peace and security; development of Africa; promotion of human rights; effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts; promotion of justice and international law; disarmament and drug control, crime prevention; and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.
13. Member States also adopted incentive action plans, the most recent of which is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including measures to assess its implementation. In the document commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Organization, Heads of State and Government declared that the Programme was their "plan of action and its implementation is a matter of survival". It should be underscored that the watchwords of this programme, which concerns everyone everywhere in the world, are protecting the planet, human survival, eradicating poverty, shared prosperity, leaving no one behind.

14. They also defined specific programmes and frameworks for countries in special situations, such as the Least Developed Countries (with the Doha Programme and enhancement of the resources and functions of the Office of the High Representative for these countries, as well as the relaunch of the Consultative Committee for these countries), Landlocked Developing Countries (with the new Kigali Programme scheduled for June 2024), Small Island Developing States, some of which are currently physically imperilled (with the revised Samoa National Guidelines at the 4th Conference in Antigua and Barbuda in May 2024), and middle-income countries (with coordinated and enhanced follow-up by the entire United Nations development system of the actions envisaged by the General Assembly). All of these programmes aim to achieve sustainable development, the main indicator being poverty eradication.
15. With regard to Africa in particular, which constitutes one of the eight (8) priorities of the United Nations, the General Assembly supports Agenda 2063, drawn up by Africa itself, with priority programmes and projects, as a powerful tool for achieving the continent's development within the framework of the Continental Free Trade Area. In this regard, there is a strategic partnership between the continent and the United Nations, as well as the position of Special Adviser on Africa to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who is responsible for all measures to monitor the implementation of the commitments made by Africa's partners.
16. To preserve peace, promote sustainable development and protect the planet, the international community should ensure that the objectives jointly set by Member States in all these programmes are achieved.
17. During my tenure, I will stress the need to fast-track the measures to be taken by the General Assembly to ensure the effective implementation of mutual commitments. The means of implementation, in particular finances, science and technology, are therefore of the utmost urgency.
18. Besides the aforementioned programmes, it should be noted that a number of activities and processes that were initiated during the tenures of my predecessors will be continued during my tenure, in order to either carry on their review or take measures for their implementation. In this regard, I would like to mention, among others, the reform of the Security Council, the revitalisation of the General Assembly, the Social Summit 2025, the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, the United Nations Conference in Support of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and the Fourth High-Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases. I should also mention the draft declaration and preparations for the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the United Nations and, above all, the follow-up to the Pact for the Future, which will be adopted at the Summit of the Future during the 79th session of the General Assembly and which are likely to impact our common future. I undertake to follow these matters keenly and see them through, in particular by appointing the right co-facilitators.

19. On another level, there are hotbeds of tension and open or latent conflict in various regions of the world. In this particular regard, the General Assembly should play its role fully by deploying the requisite efforts for prevention, appeasement, confidence-building measures, action-oriented resolutions and decisions, and by further strengthening the Commission, the Bureau and the Peacebuilding Fund.
20. As regards the revitalization of the Assembly itself in a bid to strengthen its authority, I will continue the work of my predecessors and ensure that the co-facilitators and the working group appointed for this purpose deepen and fast-track reflection on innovative ideas put forward by Member States. I will ensure that the voice of the Assembly is heard, whenever necessary, by Member States or at specific international meetings on issues of grave concern.
21. During my tenure, I will also ensure that the Assembly always stays abreast of happenings around the world, by playing its role more actively, in line with relevant procedures, either by taking on issues vetoed at the Security Council, or because a conflict, natural disaster or epidemic-related issue warrants its attention.
22. Throughout my tenure, I will hold frequent consultations and maintain contact with various regional or functional groups in order to jointly review not only their own specific concerns or interests, but also any measures the Assembly may take.
23. During my tenure, the members of my Office and the co-facilitators will be drawn from different countries taking into account parity between women and men, the usual equitable geographical distribution, as well as competence and integrity.
24. I will place appropriate priority on programmes to promote indigenous peoples and peoples of African descent, people living with disabilities and all vulnerable people.
25. Regarding young people, I will maintain the priority accorded them through the newly established Youth Office within the UN Secretariat, to which the General Assembly has allocated resources for its effective functioning under the 2024 budget. I will resume the fellowship programme for youths initiated by my predecessors.
26. On another level, as prescribed by the Assembly, I will accord importance to cooperation with the senior officials of the Principal Organs such as the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretary-General, while adhering to the approved schedule of our meetings, for the harmonious functioning of our “Common Abode”.
27. I will lay emphasis on multilingualism and multiculturalism, the bedrocks of cultural diversity, which reflect the richness of the peoples and Nations of the world.
28. I will attach special importance to interfaith and intercultural dialogue, and combating all forms of extremism and hate speech.

29. Regarding partnership, I will emphasize the need for cooperation between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations in a bid to promote peace, sustainable development and human dignity. I will also ensure, in accordance with the rules established or to be improved by Member States, strong partnership with civil society, NGOs and academic circles, so that, whenever necessary, they are consulted, and take part in and contribute to the proceedings of the Assembly.
30. Furthermore, whenever necessary, and depending on the themes chosen by agreement between the parties, in the second half of my tenure, I would organize informal interactive conversations on matters of interest or concern, with Member States or the aforementioned partners, according to the well-known African tradition of sitting “under the Palaver Tree” to settle issues.

### **MY STYLE, MY APPEAL**

31. Throughout my tenure, I will be guided by the following principles and considerations:
- Strict compliance with the terms of the oath I will take before the General Assembly prior to actually assuming office;
  - Availability and an open ear for all Member States and other partners;
  - Complete transparency, intellectual and moral honesty, impartiality, objectivity and punctuality in performing my duties;
  - Compliance with the Rules of Procedure in the conduct of business;
  - Firmness, but also flexibility, whenever necessary, in overseeing consultations towards achieving set goals.
32. To conclude and if I were to summarize my stewardship in a few words, I would say: beyond our diversities and our differences, let us act and work together to promote peace, end war, encourage harmony of hearts and minds; together, let us act, let us strive to accelerate sustainable development, shared prosperity, harmony with nature or the environment, whose abundant but not unlimited resources must be used rationally, judiciously and wisely, while mainstreaming the corrective and transitional measures for the sake of present and future generations; together let's act, let's strive to promote human dignity everywhere and for everyone.
33. Let us act, let us strive to foster multilateralism based on a solid foundation anchored in the goals, principles and objectives enshrined in the United Nations Charter.
34. Together, let us heed History’s clarion call for humanism. This is one rare call that, over the course of a century, History makes to only one generation, the source of the future!
35. If the Member States were to honour me by electing me as President of the 79th Session of the General Assembly, that would be hailing, in a big way, the unity and solidarity of the group

of African States whose turn it is to chair the UNGA, and which has spared no effort in coming up with a single continental candidate. It will also be a great honour for my country, Cameroon, a one-time trust territory of the United Nations, and generally speaking, for the maturity of its diplomacy on the international scene. Above all, it would be a glowing tribute to President Paul Biya, for his insightful views regularly expressed from the rostrum of the General Assembly. Lastly, for me, this would be an honour or, better still, a duty, to serve the entire international community with humility and honesty, in the wake of history's call.