



PERMANENT MISSION
OF MALTA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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UNGA81 – Malta national statement during Second Committee General Debate

Malta Statement delivered by Permanent Representative Natasha Meli

Madam Chair,

At the outset allow me to join previous speakers in congratulating you and the Bureau on your election and assure you of our full support.

Chair,

Malta aligns with the European Union statement and adds the following in its national capacity.

Colleagues, we are in the final stretch of the 2030 Agenda. While we have made notable progress on several socio-economic issues, we must be clear-eyed and resolute about the task ahead.

First, climate. 2024 was the first calendar year to exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and we note with deep concern the findings of UNEP's 'Limiting Overshoot' report. In a resolution initiated by Malta, the General Assembly recognised climate change in 1988 as a common concern of humankind. Four decades later, the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion affirmed this principle.

While we will advocate for high ambition in addressing the triple planetary crises, we will also advocate for delivery. We



need a COP31 that closes the gap between pledges and action. Furthermore, sea-level rise is redrawing coastlines and threatening livelihoods, freshwater, and for some, the very territory of the state. We warmly welcome the first-ever UN Declaration on Sea-level Rise, and support mainstreaming sea-level rise into all relevant UN processes.

Climate change is also innately linked with food insecurity. Rainfall and temperature fluctuations caused by the current El Niño further increase the risk of flooding, drought and extreme temperatures, and threaten food production and water availability. We must integrate water, energy, food security, and climate change in our work.

Second, sustainable development cannot be achieved without the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation and leadership of women and girls. Malta reaffirms its commitment to fully implementing the Pact for the Future to advance sustainable development.

Third, finance. Ambitious action will be limited without reforms to an international financial architecture designed for the twentieth century. The Sevilla Commitment gave us a roadmap on debt, tax cooperation, and representation of developing countries in international financial institutions. Our task now is to implement it to achieve these objectives.



Fourth, SIDS contribute least to these issues yet bear the highest costs, while GDP per capita locks many out of concessional finance. The Multidimensional Vulnerability Index must move from adoption to application, and the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda must be backed by resources. As an island state, Malta will continue to stand with SIDS in this Committee and beyond.

Finally, Madam Chair, we believe that the benefits of AI must be enjoyed equally by all humanity. Trust in AI requires cooperation and rules grounded in international law. Malta therefore supports the Global Digital Compact, which embeds AI for humanity within its goals and accelerates progress on the SDGs.

Madam Chair,

None of these challenges are new. What has changed is the time left to act. Let this session be measured not by the number of resolutions we adopt, but by what they deliver.

I thank you.