



# REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

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## Acceptance Speech

by Ambassador Philemon YANG,

*following his election as President of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly*

**New York, 6 June 2024**

**United Nations General Assembly Hall**

*Check against delivery*

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PERMANENT MISSION OF CAMEROON TO  
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22 East 73rd Street New York, N .Y. 10021  
Tel : (646) 850-1827/1824 Fax : (646) 850-1820

Web: [www.delecam.us](http://www.delecam.us)  
E-mail: [delecam@delecam.us](mailto:delecam@delecam.us)

**Mr. President, thank you for giving me the floor.**

It has been 79 years since the United Nations was created by the founding fathers, with the General Assembly as an important body among the six main organs which, each year, elects a President to lead its work.

On this solemn occasion, I would like, at the outset, to turn to my predecessors, including the most immediate in office, Ambassador Dennis Francis of Trinidad and Tobago, to thank them, to congratulate them on the talent, art and science that each of them has deployed during their term of office to bring our deliberations to a successful conclusion on the progressively numerous, diverse and complex issues that are intensively discussed during each session.

I would then like to turn to all Member States to express my sincere gratitude for the support they have given to my election.

I would like to immensely thank, in particular, the Group of African of States which, in pursuance of its turn to assume the presidency of the 79th session consistent with the established pattern of regional rotation, was kind enough to present my candidacy. I feel that this election is a great salute to the unity and solidarity of our Group, and the African Union in particular, which has spared no effort to achieve the choice of a single continental candidate, thus corroborating its well-known legendary discipline in terms of candidacy.

I also feel that this election is a great recognition of the Central African countries, which endorsed Cameroon

very early on at the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Summit held in Kintélé, Republic of Congo, on January 19, 2022.

In addition, and as underlined in my letter of intent and commitment, my present election is also a great honour for my country, Cameroon, a ward of the United Nations, and for the maturity of its diplomacy of presence and active participation on the international scene.

Moreover, this election is, without a doubt, a great tribute to President Paul Biya, whose wisdom and pertinence of views are regularly expressed from the rostrum of our Assembly.

Finally, I also feel that this election is an honour, but above all an obligation for me to humbly and honestly serve the entire international community throughout my term of office.

To all of you, I am infinitely grateful.

**Mr. President,**

**Mr. Secretary-General,**

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We are living in very difficult times, marked by very striking contrasts. Indeed, the prodigious development of science and technology has placed in our hands an impressive body of knowledge and know-how to provide solutions to the needs of present and future generations

in terms of peace, security, economic, social and cultural well-being for each and all.

In this fast-moving digital era, artificial intelligence is now magnifying not just the opportunities but also the challenges, so quickly, to the point that even the most convinced followers of digitalization are calling for rigorous regulation in order to prevent our fate from being entrusted to the hands of robots, based on assessments by which the slightest error is likely to ruin us.

Despite all this improvement, these possibilities and these potentialities, our era is characterized, unfortunately, by blatant inequalities, selfishness, competition for power and diverse interests, alongside powerful centrifugal forces which threaten the cohesion and solidarity of humanity.

Geopolitical and geostrategic tensions continue to fuel distrust among States, and are intensifying an unstoppable arms race, including in space. An exponential increase in military budgets, the sophistication of military doctrines and rules of engagement on the ground, including the possibility or threat of use of nuclear weapons are the frightening realities of the world in which we live today.

Open or latent conflicts are increasing in various regions of the world, with their accompanying suffering and unbearable toll on civilians, refugees and internally displaced populations whose numbers are currently reaching a dizzying peak. The cases of Gaza and Ukraine are very painfully illustrative in this regard.

Climate disruption, a real question of survival, due to human activity or the vagaries of nature itself, leads to disasters in terms of floods, landslides, hurricanes, fires, just to mention these few challenges facing many countries in almost all regions of the world.

In such a context, countries in special situations such as Least Developed Countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, middle-income countries, African countries, countries in conflict, are hardest hit. This is why the projects and specific programmes that the Assembly has dedicated to them must be the subject of careful and priority monitoring and implementation measures.

The reforms undertaken so far in order to respond to the realities of our time - whether it concerns the



revitalization of the General Assembly, the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, the reform of the Security Council or the international financial architecture - are often blocked or moving forward slowly, well below the expected results.

Those reforms which have resulted in an appreciable global consensus, such as the Paris Climate Agreement or the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and on which so much hope had been placed, are limping dangerously, due to a lack of resources for implementation, especially when it comes to Finance or Technology. Action and the political will to move forward are timidly on rendezvous, if not absent in many cases.

In short, the tools at our disposal to promote the well-being of present and future generations are underutilized,

while those oriented towards war are overexploited, in a divided world where diverse forces are in a dynamic state of confrontation.

We must therefore increase efforts and stimulate the political will so we may act more energetically to change this situation.

**Monsieur le Président,**

**M. le Secrétaire Général,**

**Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs**

Pour toutes ces raisons, j'ai placé mon mandat sous le thème de : ***l'unité dans la diversité pour l'avancement de la paix, du développement durable et de la dignité humaine partout et pour tous***. En d'autres termes, s'affranchir de la peur « freedom from fear », s'affranchir du besoin « freedom from want », sont des conditions sine

qua none, des facteurs catalysants pour la pleine jouissance des droits de l'homme, et en définitive de la dignité humaine

J'ai également souligné que l'Assemblée Générale est l'instance la plus indiquée où les États membres, dans toute leur diversité, sont appelés à exprimer en toute liberté et sérénité, les préoccupations, les propositions, les opportunités, en d'autres termes, les défis et l'espoir des différents peuples et nations du monde. En cela, l'Assemblée est la plus haute chambre de représentation et de délibération où les États se doivent de débattre et non de combattre. En somme, c'est le grand tam-tam, pour reprendre une image africaine, qui résonne la voix des peuples et des nations.

Mais aussi, l'Assemblée est le lieu le plus indiqué, le grand baobab sous lequel les nations grandes ou petites, riches ou pauvres, harmonisent leurs vues à des fins communes, recherchent activement un consensus, une moyenne de vues partagées représentant la médiane permettant à chacun de donner et de recevoir, consolidant ainsi le vivre ensemble et la jouissance partagée des dividendes de la paix, du développement et de la dignité humaine.

Cette dynamique doit en permanence nous guider dans la formulation du Pacte de l'avenir en cours de négociation, ainsi que la Déclaration sur les générations futures et le pacte numérique.

Ce qu'il convient de rechercher ardemment au-delà de nos délibérations et de nos consensus, c'est l'action décisive grâce à la mise à disposition des voies et moyens

de mise en œuvre des solutions auxquelles nous aurons abouties.

En cela, je voudrais répéter volontiers les propos conclusifs de ma lettre d'intention et d'engagement qui constituent un leitmotiv sous-tendant en permanence mon mandat : au-delà de nos diversités, de nos divergences, ensemble agissons, œuvrons pour l'avancement de la paix, absence de guerre, prévention, concorde des cœurs et des esprits ; ensemble agissons, œuvrons pour l'accélération du développement durable, prospérité partagée, harmonie avec la nature, l'environnement dont les ressources, abondantes certes mais non limitées, se doivent d'être consommées avec modération, sobriété et sagesse, tenant dûment compte des mesures correctives et transitionnelles pour les générations présentes et futures ; ensemble agissons,

œuvrons pour la promotion de la dignité humaine partout et pour tous et dont chacun de nous porte en lui la forme entière, dans une liberté plus grande.

Pour tout dire agissons, œuvrons pour le renforcement d'un multilatéralisme dont la solidité repose sur un socle granitique ancré dans les buts, les principes et les objectifs de la Charte des Nations Unies.

Pendant tout l'exercice de mon mandat, je m'engage à servir dans cette voie, dans le strict respect des termes du serment que j'aurai à prêter, dans la grande disponibilité et écoute au service de l'ensemble des États membres et d'autres partenaires ; je travaillerai étroitement avec le Secrétaire Général de notre Organisation, M. Antonio Guterres, qui œuvre quotidiennement et sans relâche dans divers domaines

d'activités dont s'occupent les Nations Unies et où il a fait de nombreuses propositions concrètes qui méritent d'être prises en considération dans nos délibérations ; je coopérerai également avec les Chefs des autres Organes principaux, notamment le Président du Conseil de Sécurité, le Président du Conseil Économique et Social, suivant les prescriptions faites par l'Assemblée Générale ; j'agirai avec transparence, probité intellectuelle et morale, impartialité et objectivité, conformément au règlement intérieur de l'Assemblée, avec fermeté, mais aussi flexibilité et souplesse nécessaires aux consultations et à la recherche active du consensus.

**Je vous remercie de votre bien aimable attention./-**