

What the World's Leaders Really Tell Us Every September at the UN General Debate:

A Diplomatic Commentary on the Power of
UN Speeches.

by Dr. Augustina ŞİMAN



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Reading between the lines: How to forecast states' priorities?	6
UN General Debate as a strategic communication opportunity	10
Looking ahead: Preparing a memorable speech for the 2026 UN	
General Debate	13
About the author	17
ANNEX: Themes of the UN General Debates for 2020 – 2026	18

Introduction

The United Nations General Assembly meets on an annual basis in regular session during which it conducts elections, debates intensively, adopts resolutions, etc. on a variety of matters on its [agenda](#) (including those coming from its six main Committees), from September to December, and resumes its work in January until all issues on the agenda are addressed – which often is just before the next session starts. Therefore, for instance, the working period from September 2025 to September 2026 represents the Eightieth (80th) session of the UN General Assembly.

Moreover, **for each new working session of the UN General Assembly a new President (PGA) is elected** based on the principle of equitable geographical rotation ([Rule 30 of the UNGA Rules of Procedure](#)) among its [5 regional groups](#). Elections of the new PGA take place, regularly, [in June](#), with the President taking [oath of office on the original Charter](#) of the United Nations at the beginning of September of the same year –marking the final plenary meeting of the preceding session and, respectively, the [opening a new working session of the UN General Assembly](#) within the same day but in two subsequent meetings (which, for instance, in the case of Her Excellency Annalena Baerbock (of Germany, Western-European Group of the UNGA), President of the 80th session of the General Assembly, occurred on [September 9th of 2025](#)).

*In paragraph 50 of its resolution [75/325](#), the General Assembly decided to amend rule 1 of its [rules of procedure](#) to read:

The General Assembly shall meet every year in regular session commencing on the Tuesday of the second week in September, counting from the first week that contains at least one working day.

The general debate in the General Assembly shall open on the Tuesday of the fourth week in September, counting from the first week that contains at least one working day, and shall be held without interruption over a period of nine working days.

80th SESSION OF THE UNGA (2025 – 2026)



81st SESSION OF THE UNGA (2026 – 2027)



PGA 80th Session of the UNGA: Annalena Baerbock of Germany, Western European Group of the UNGA.



PGA 81st Session of the UNGA: Khalilur Rahman of Bangladesh, Asia-Pacific Group of the UNGA.

But **why is the President of the UN General Assembly such an important figure in the context of this Diplomatic Commentary?** The answer is: each sessional year (since the 60th session in 2005), the new President-elect of the UN General Assembly sets the theme of global concern for the upcoming General Debate within the margins of the UN High Level Week, based on informal discussions with Member States, the President of the current ongoing session of the General Assembly, and the Secretary-General. Shortly after the election of the new UNGA President, the respective sends a letter to all UN Member States announcing the theme for the upcoming session and, therefore, General Debate, inviting them to focus their speeches on the proposed theme. The theme is afterwards enshrined in a document called “Arrangements for the high-level meetings and the general debate of the eightieth session of the General Assembly”.

The following important question is: **What are the United Nations High Level Week and the General Debate?** This brings us even closer to the core of our Diplomatic Commentary.

To understand the significance of the UN High Level Week and, particularly, of the General Debate, one must first appreciate the extraordinary diplomatic setting in which it unfolds.

Every September, following the first plenary meeting of the new session of the UN General Assembly (at the level of which “housekeeping matters”, such as appointments and agenda, are decided upon), New York becomes the epicenter of global diplomacy. The city welcomes thousands of members of delegations of UN member states and observers - one of the largest annual gatherings of world leaders, ministers, international decision-makers and diplomats: the **United Nations High-Level Week**.

As part of the UN High Level Week, for several days, the headquarters of the United Nations transforms into a unique diplomatic arena where an intensive programme of high-level meetings dedicated to the world's most pressing challenges unwraps.

For instance, in 2025 alone, the UNHLW agenda (22 – 30 September) included several high-level official events where global leaders participated in discussions on matters of high international importance: the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the United Nations, the annual SDG Moment, a high-level conference on the peaceful settlement of the Question of Palestine and the implementation of the Two-State Solution, the Climate Summit, the launch of the Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence Governance, and numerous other events addressing issues that shape the international agenda of multilateral cooperation.

Against this backdrop of intense diplomatic activity, one event taking part in the margins of the UNHLP stands apart from all others: the notorious **General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly**.

Traditionally taking place within a 6 days-period (although can it be held without interruption for 9 days - according to the [Rules of Procedure](#) and resolution [A/RES/57/301](#)), the UN General Debate is the annual meeting of all Heads of State and Government of the UN membership, being usually also the first debate of the new General Assembly session.

As previously underlined, each year a new theme is chosen for the General Debate, announced by the new President of the General Assembly. Unlike specific thematic meetings that focus on a particular issue, the General Debate offers the [193 Member States and 2 observers](#) a unique opportunity to present their own assessment of the international landscape and voice their foreign policy priorities.

Over the course of several days, Heads of State, Heads of Government and Ministers for Foreign Affairs, acting as heads of delegations (*at times replaced by their Ambassadors to the UN if a change in the principal's agenda occurred, or if there is a period of political transition in the country*) deliver national statements from the iconic green marble podium of the General Assembly Hall, setting out their vision of the world's most pressing challenges, reaffirming existing partnerships, announcing new initiatives and signaling the diplomatic priorities they intend to pursue throughout the newly opened session – customarily in line with the theme.

To many observers, these speeches may appear ceremonial or even repetitive. In reality every statement is the product of extensive political consultations taking place at a national level and careful drafting – at times involving multiple people, such as heads of divisions and departments at a Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the team from the country's Permanent Mission to UN in New York. Every paragraph is deliberate. Every omission is often as revealing as every explicit commitment. For diplomats and practitioners of international affairs alike, **the General Debate is not simply a sequence of speeches but rather is one of the earliest and most comprehensive indicators of the diplomatic landscape that will shape negotiations at the United Nations over the months ahead**. This strategic dimension makes the General Debate worthy of closer examination. Behind the carefully crafted rhetoric lies a remarkable opportunity to understand how States perceive the international system, which issues they choose to elevate, the partnerships they seek to strengthen, and the priorities they intend to advance throughout the new session of the General Assembly.

Reading between the lines: How to forecast states' priorities?

If the General Debate provides the first comprehensive public expression of a State's diplomatic priorities for the newly opened General Assembly session, an equally important question follows: **how should these speeches be interpreted?** More specifically, can they serve not only as political declarations but also as reliable indicators of a State's future diplomatic conduct? For experienced diplomats, the answer is often yes.

The General Debate is not only an opportunity to hear what governments wish to communicate to the international community. It is equally an opportunity to anticipate how they are likely to act in the months that follow. Before draft resolutions are circulated, like-minded groups of states are formed, or negotiations formally commence, governments publicly reveal important elements of their diplomatic agenda.

Governments are allocated only a limited amount of speaking time before the General Assembly (*a voluntary 15-minute time limit for statements is to be observed in the General Debate*). Consequently, the inclusion - or exclusion - of a particular issue of an international magnitude in a national statement is often deliberate.

This perspective fundamentally changes the way these speeches should be listened to or read. As an example, **journalists** often focus on the most memorable political statements or controversial remarks, searching for headlines, **historians** may later read these speeches as records of a particular moment in international affairs, but **diplomats and hired experts of the Permanent Missions of UN member-states to UN, however, listen differently. The latter are rarely interested in rhetorical flourish alone. Instead, they seek to identify signals that reveal a government's strategic thinking and provide insight into its likely diplomatic priorities.**

For instance, if a state's speech has repeated references to climate this can serve as a strong **indicator of increased diplomatic engagement of the respective state on climate matters at the UN** – such as the case of Vanuatu, which had a strong emphasis on climate in its national statement during the [UNGA General Debates \(29 September 2025\)](#), and then further into the session, prepared and led through successful adoption the [resolution backing the advisory opinion of the UN International Court of Justice on](#)

climate change; if a state, in its **national statement**, **heavily criticizes the UN** **this suggests the strong possibility that the respective will limit its support for the work of the organization** – as was the case of the US in its 23 of September 2025 General Debate speech, which, just a few months later, was followed by an Executive Order withdrawing the US from and ending funding to certain United Nations Organizations; if a state makes several **references to technology and artificial intelligence in its speech**, **one can foresee the country's interest in being actively involved with AI Governance processes at UN** – such as the case of Estonia, emphasizing the responsible use of AI during the 2025 General Debate, and its representative being appointed as Co-Chair to the 2026 Global Dialogue on AI Governance, with its first session being held on 6 and 7 July 2026 in Geneva; and the list continues.

For those working within the multilateral system, every intervention raises a series of practical questions. In this sense, below a proposed **Five-Step Framework for Reading the General Debate Speeches**:

Step 1: Understand the Political Context Behind the Speech

Every General Debate statement reflects a particular political moment in the life of a State. Before analyzing the substance of a speech, it is essential to understand the domestic and international circumstances in which it was delivered.

Recent elections, changes of government, armed conflicts or protracted conflicts with neighboring states, economic crises, constitutional reforms or major foreign policy shifts often explain why certain issues suddenly emerge as priorities for a state while others disappear altogether. Likewise, upcoming elections or political transitions may indicate that a country's foreign policy, voting position on UN resolutions, and national views expressed in UN debates are likely to change during the General Assembly session.

This contextual assessment also helps distinguish between long-term diplomatic priorities and positions driven by temporary political circumstances.

Examples of questions to ask: *Was there a recent election or change of government? Is the Head of State beginning or ending a mandate? Is the country experiencing domestic political instability? Have there been significant national developments affecting foreign policy? Could domestic political developments alter the country's longstanding positions during the session?*

Step 2: Identify What the Country Chose to Prioritize

Governments have around 15 minutes to address the General Assembly. The more attention devoted to a particular topic, the greater the likelihood that the issue will receive sustained diplomatic engagement during the forthcoming session.

Rather than focusing exclusively on opening or closing remarks, attention should be paid to the overall distribution of the speech. Issues occupying the largest proportion of the intervention often reveal where the delegation intends to invest political focus, diplomatic resources and negotiating effort.

Examples of questions to ask: Which topics are highlighted in the speech? Which matters of international affairs received more detailed attention? Which legal principles are repeatedly invoked and, not less important, in which interpretative direction? Which issues appear to define the country's foreign policy narrative? Which international bodies receive particular attention? Did the country launch a call for the wider UN membership to join a Group addressing an issue at an international level?

Step 3: Pay Equal Attention to Diplomatic Silence

Equally important in diplomatic analysis is what a country deliberately chooses not to say. Silence of a UN member-state does not necessarily indicate indifference. It may reflect political sensitivity, strategic ambiguity, domestic constraints, neutrality, flexibility, lack of national position, or an unwillingness to become publicly associated with a particular issue.

When comparing multiple General Debate statements, omissions frequently become as revealing as explicit declarations. For example, a country that strongly condemns one conflict while remaining silent on another may signal where it is prepared - or unwilling - to support future diplomatic action for the resolution of a conflict.

Examples of questions to ask: Which major international conflicts are omitted? Which international crises receive only passing reference? With which of the countries engaged in a conflict does the state have stronger bilateral political ties? Which controversial issues appear intentionally avoided? Which major UN processes did the country not refer to?

Step 4: Measure the State's Alignment with the Theme of the General Debate

Each General Debate revolves around a theme proposed by the President of the General Assembly. While all delegations formally acknowledge it, the extent to which they genuinely structure their intervention around the theme varies considerably.

A close alignment with the annual theme may indicate that a State intends to engage actively in the multilateral agenda throughout the session, invest political capital in General Assembly processes, and contribute to diplomatic initiatives.

Conversely, statements that merely mention the theme before quickly turning to domestic concerns or bilateral grievances may suggest that the country's focus during the session will remain on advancing national priorities through UN rather than fully looking for solutions to support the bettering of the work of the organization (especially when UN faces financial crises, institutional reform challenges, when intense geopolitical polarization is affecting the effectiveness of the Security Council, etc.).

Examples of questions to ask: *Is the country speaking primarily about the United Nations or primarily about events occurring at its national level? Does the speech give the feeling that the country is addressing primarily the heads of delegations present in the General Assembly Hall or its national audience? Did the country voice support for any UN Secretary-General initiative? Are any calls to solving the crises UN is facing being made, and are there any solutions being put forward in this sense?*

Step 5: Transform Diplomatic Signals into a Forecast of Future UN Engagement

The final step requires synthesizing the previous stages into a forward-looking assessment.

Rather than analyzing the speech of a state as an isolated political statement, the analyst should interpret it against the forthcoming work of the United Nations - including the agenda of the new session of the General Assembly, upcoming negotiations, ongoing multilateral processes, and the dynamic of existing and emerging international crises - to determine where the country is most likely to concentrate its diplomatic efforts.

Examples of questions to ask: *Which agenda items is the delegation likely to prioritize? Which negotiations the country's delegation might try to influence or participate more actively in? Which resolutions might the country put forward, co-sponsor or oppose? Which UN institutional reforms may the country actively advocate for? To which UN conflict resolution processes will the country extend sustained diplomatic attention and active involvement? On which issue is the country most likely to exercise diplomatic leadership or, on the contrary, remain relatively disengaged?*

Although no forecasting methodology can account for every subsequent political development, when read in context and analyzed systematically, General Debate speeches remain one of the earliest and most valuable indicators of a State's intended diplomatic trajectory for the new working session of the GA.

UN General Debate as a strategic communication opportunity

During the [United Nations High Level Week](#) the streets surrounding the United Nations Headquarters in New York become the setting for one of the largest annual gatherings of political leaders anywhere in the world. Motorcades replace ordinary traffic, security measures reach their highest levels, hundreds of bilateral meetings take place within the UN and behind closed doors in surrounding Permanent Missions and other venues, and diplomats move almost continuously between the General Assembly Hall, conference rooms and Permanent Missions. Yet another audience follows these developments just as closely: **the global media**.

The UN High-Level Week - and particularly the General Debate - constitutes one of the most significant strategic communication opportunities available to governments throughout the sessional year of the General Assembly. While the speeches delivered from the General Assembly podium are formally addressed to the international community, their intended audiences extend far beyond the delegates seated inside the Hall. Heads of State and Government speak simultaneously to foreign governments, international organizations, domestic constituencies, financial markets, civil society, academia and millions of people following events through television broadcasts, newspapers and digital media platforms from across the world which come to New York to cover the General Debate.

The significance of this **communication opportunity** is, therefore, reflected in the **extensive communication machinery that accompanies national delegations**, as well as in the **scale of media coverage**.

Alongside diplomats, policy advisers and notetakers, many governments include in their national delegations press secretaries, strategic communication advisers, official photographers and videographers from their capitals specifically to cover the activities of their Head of Delegation and high-level members (such as Ministers). Throughout the High-Level Week, national media closely follow the delivery of the General Debate speech, bilateral meetings with other leaders, participation in high-level events and appearances before international press. For many domestic audiences, these reports become the principal window through which they observe their country's engagement

on the UN diplomatic stage, how their own leaders are representing national interests and what outcomes they are seeking to achieve at an international level.

At the same time, the concentration of international media in New York creates a communication environment unlike any other during the UN diplomatic calendar. Global broadcasters, regional television networks, international newspapers and specialized foreign affairs correspondents compete to interview presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers and other senior officials.

As a result, the communication value of a General Debate speech extends well beyond the fifteen minutes allocated at the podium. Moreover, the messages articulated before the General Assembly are almost immediately amplified through television broadcasts, newspaper articles, official government websites, interviews, press conferences and increasingly through digital platforms, where selected excerpts often reach audiences far larger than those physically present in the Assembly Hall. **A carefully crafted sentence may become an international headline within minutes; a memorable formulation may shape global public debate long after the General Debate has concluded.**

This explains why General Debate speeches are drafted with exceptional care and why political leaders attach great importance to them. Every formulation is expected to satisfy multiple audiences simultaneously. A single speech must reassure domestic voters, signal policy intentions to allies, communicate red lines to hostile countries, demonstrate reliability to international partners and project the country's identity within the multilateral system while adhering to the theme of the General Debate. Achieving all these objectives within approximately fifteen minutes represents one of the most demanding exercises in diplomatic communication.

Moreover, for smaller and medium-sized States this visibility is particularly valuable. Countries that may receive only limited international media attention throughout the year suddenly find themselves speaking from the same podium as the world's largest powers, before the same audience and under the same global media spotlight.

The General Debate therefore offers all UN Member States and their leaders an opportunity to bolster their political image and how they are perceived both domestically and internationally.

In line with everything previously noted, below a few examples of fragments (*from the speeches delivered during the 2025 General Debate*), which introduced a major policy announcement, reflected a significant geopolitical development, challenged existing

international status quo, or captured prevailing public concerns in a particularly memorable manner, thus being reflected in domestic and international media:

"We must pave the way for peace. Today, France recognizes the State of Palestine."

President Emmanuel Macron of France, [UN General Debate, 22 September 2025](#). Covered by: [CNN](#), [The New York Times](#), [Le Monde](#), etc.

"What is happening in Europe today could happen anywhere else tomorrow - under different circumstances, but under the exact same pretext. If Russia wins this unjust war, it will legitimize the triumph of brute force. Turning a blind eye to Ukraine today is a green light to any future aggressor, anywhere in the world. Disruptions of the status quo in the Taiwan Strait or elsewhere in the Indo-Pacific would further destabilize global security and trade. Geographical distance offers no protection – security in one part of the world is directly linked to security everywhere. Tolerating the principle of might makes right will lead to the end of multilateralism and the beginning of life under principles dictated by a powerful few."

President Petr Pavel of the Czech Republic, [UN General Debate, 24 September 2025](#). Covered by: [UN Meetings Coverage](#), [UNN](#), [OcacNews](#), [TaipeiTimes](#), etc.

"How can we understand that Africa, the cradle of humanity and home to so many conflicts, representing over a billion people, remains excluded from the UN Security Council's decision-making?"

Prime Minister Rintalba Jean Emmanuel Ouedraogo of Burkina Faso, [UN General Debate, 27 September 2025](#). Covered by: [UN Meetings Coverage](#), [Questionafricane](#), [Afriketimes](#), etc.

"Diseases (...), financial contagion, (...) climate change (...). No single nation, acting on its own, can resolve these. Multilateral approaches are not the problem. Multilateral approaches offer pathways to the solutions. The United Nations is not perfect, but it is the best tool for multilateral action that we have. We workmen should not blame our tools. The flaw is not in the hammer, but in the hand that lets it fall."

Prime Minister Philip Edward Davis of Bahamas, [UN General Debate, 27 September 2025](#). Covered by: [UN Meetings Coverage](#), [BahamasPress](#), [BahamasLocal](#), etc.

Looking ahead: Preparing a memorable speech for the 2026 UN General Debate

The General Debate offers every Member State the same podium, the same speaking time and the same global audience. Therefore, the speeches delivered by global leaders have the opportunity to shape diplomatic conversations, generate international media attention or become reference points for practitioners and scholars alike.

The difference between speeches which have such an impact and the ones that do not lies in how the speech itself is constructed. An effective General Debate statement does more than describe national foreign policy. It communicates a vision, advances diplomatic priorities, strengthens a country's international standing and leaves audiences with messages that continue to resonate long after the speaker has left the General Assembly Hall.

As demonstrated throughout this Commentary, an excellent General Debate speech simultaneously fulfils a variety of functions (reflects the political priorities of the government, positions the country within ongoing United Nations processes, etc.). Therefore, preparing such a speech is not simply an exercise in political drafting, but an exercise in diplomacy, strategic communication and international positioning.

With the opening of the General Debates of the Eighty-first Session of the General Assembly approaching, the following recommendations may assist diplomats and speechwriters in making the most of this unique opportunity.

Recommendations for preparing a memorable speech for the 2026 UN General Debate:

Before drafting

- **Study this year's General Debate theme and ongoing UN processes carefully:** The theme of the General Debate of the 81st session of the GA is "*Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: A United Nations that Delivers for All*". The speech should do more than mention the theme - it should demonstrate how your country's participation in UN diplomacy contributes to the theme.

- **Know your audience:** Remember that you are speaking simultaneously to world leaders, governments, diplomats, journalists, international organizations, civil society, international audience and your own domestic audience.
- **Check-check-check:** Ensure that the ideas or phrases you wish to include are not conflicting with your country's standing at UN (*consult thematic experts*) or with the standing of an important ally of your country to the extent that it might negatively impact on the relationship between the two states (*for instance, you might be tempted to include in the national statement a strong condemnation of the bombing of schools during armed conflicts while an important partner to your country is putting considerable efforts into negotiations of UN Security Council resolutions to exclude any references that such actions constitute violations of international humanitarian law – this is best left unwritten and unsaid if it will negatively impact the bilateral cooperation between the two countries*).

During drafting

- **Use the General Debate to strengthen not only the visibility of the political leader but also the country's standing within the United Nations:** Beyond presenting national political events, highlight how your country contributes to the work of the Organization or how it sees its work, for instance by referring to relevant UN processes, resolutions, negotiations, initiatives, conferences, candidatures in the main UN bodies (*such as the UN Security Council or the UN International Court of Justice*) or other concrete contributions. The speech should leave audiences with the impression that your country is a knowledgeable and active participant in global multilateral diplomacy.
- **Write for quotation:** Be intentional about the wording of the paragraphs you want to be quoted in the media and in the reports of diplomats that are sent to capitals across the world. Journalists and diplomats alike often search for **memorable formulations** that encapsulate a country's position. As a practical rule, and to increase the likelihood of quotation, aim to include in the speech at least three paragraphs containing strong, quotable messages that can easily become news headlines or core parts of diplomatic reporting.
- **Prepare a Translation of the Speech in Another Official UN Language:** During the General Debate, every national statement is simultaneously interpreted into the six official languages of the United Nations. Nevertheless, simultaneous interpretation, however professional, is inevitably constrained by time pressure, the pace of delivery, and the extraordinary volume of speeches

interpreted during High-Level Week. Therefore, nuances, rhetorical devices, and carefully crafted political messaging may not always achieve their intended impact. For this reason, **once the speech has been finalized and approved at the country level, consider preparing an official translation into at least one additional UN language.** Doing so allows your delegation to preserve the intended meaning, tone, and persuasive effect of the speech, rather than relying exclusively on real-time interpretation by UN translators. This becomes particularly valuable when the statement contains politically sensitive formulations, nuanced legal arguments, or paragraphs specifically designed to be quoted. **Distribute both the original statement and at least one translated version** that the UN translator will read, through the UN Statements e-mail distribution system. **This significantly expands the speech's messages reach as they were designed by capital.**

Given UN's deep commitment to multilateralism and multilingualism, **consider strategically incorporating short passages in another official UN language directly into the speech itself.** Such multilingual moments can serve as powerful diplomatic signals, demonstrating respect, strengthening engagement with specific regional groups, and increasing the memorability of key political messages.

For example: imagine that your country is campaigning for a seat on the UN Security Council and diplomatic assessments indicate that additional support is needed from the African Group, particularly francophone African states, to receive the necessary votes for successful election. You might then want to include, in an effort to gain their attention and reaffirm the commitment of your country at the highest level (let's say it's a President delivering the speech) to supporting the region, a reference - in French - that Africa should be actively involved and consulted in Security Council processes.

- **Read the speech aloud several times:** Respect the voluntary 15-minute time limit and identify passages requiring further refinement. A well-paced speech is generally more impactful than one delivered in haste to remain within the allocated time.

Before delivery

- **Prepare the Head of Delegation beyond the speech itself:** A memorable General Debate statement can easily be overshadowed by an avoidable protocol misstep or an unexpected incident during its delivery. Heads of Delegation

should therefore be thoroughly briefed on protocol, delivery, timing and conduct before taking the General Assembly podium. History offers several reminders of how such moments can outlive the substance of a speech, including Nikita Khrushchev's appearance during the 1960 General Debate, remembered for one of the most famous incidents in UN history after reportedly banging his shoe during proceedings, and the widely circulated moment when [Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry, addressing the General Assembly, unexpectedly drank water directly from a pitcher](#), drawing significant attention away from the substance of his statement. [Careful preparation helps ensure that the speech - not an unintended distraction - becomes the lasting memory of the intervention.](#)

- **Prepare for media engagement:** The speech is only one part of the communication strategy. Anticipate the questions likely to arise during interviews that will follow the General Debate and draft the answers for your head of delegation – alongside with thematic experts, ensuring that key messages are reinforced consistently throughout High-Level Week and that appropriate details are presented in strengthening the country's standing.

Most importantly, **diplomacy often remembers not those who spoke the longest, but those who said something the world could not afford to forget.**

About the author

Augustina ȘIMAN holds a **Doctoral Degree**, with a thesis in Public International Law, as well as a Master's Degree in International Law, from Moldova State University. She co-authored a monograph entitled „The Impact of International Organizations on the Development of Contemporary Public International Law” (Chișinău, 2019). She is an **alum of prestigious international law and diplomatic studies** at the Hague Academy of International Law (*UN fellowship*), Vienna Diplomatic Academy, the Romanian Diplomatic Institute, and the Jan Paderewski Institute of Diplomacy in Poland. In 2022, following her **endorsement by 3 members of the UN International Law Commission**, she was selected for the eminent International Law Seminar – where she conducted research on reparations to Individuals for gross violations of International Human Rights Law and serious violations of International Humanitarian Law.

Between 2023 – 2024 she served on the **UN Security Council**, focusing on issues such as: rules of procedure, working methods and documentation of the UN Security Council, counterterrorism, cooperation with the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court, as well as regional conflicts and thematic files.

She holds a rich diplomatic acumen across the **UN General Assembly** as well on matters such as: UN elections, 6th (legal) - 5th (administrative and budgetary) - 3rd (social, humanitarian, and cultural) Committees. During her tenure as an accredited Moldovan diplomat to UN (2019 – 2022), elected by acclamation by the UN General Assembly, she served as **Vice-President of Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea**. She also served as Advisor to the Chair of the UN Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization. *A seasoned diplomatic speechwriter, Dr. Șiman wrote speeches for senior government officials, including addresses delivered during the United Nations General Debate.*

Prior to this, she taught Public International Law and other related courses at the Faculty of Law of Moldova State University, and since has continued to deliver Special Guest lectures on contemporary pressing issues – “Modern Challenges to Public International Law and Multilateral Diplomacy at the UN”, “The impact of sea-level rise on statehood”, “Artificial Intelligence in Conflict – Reflections from the UN Security Council”.

ANNEX: Themes of the UN General Debates for 2020 – 2026

*Each year a new theme is chosen for the general debate by the newly elected President of the UN General Assembly. The President-elect of the General Assembly suggests a topic/theme of global concern for the upcoming general debate, based on informal discussions with Member States, the current President of the General Assembly, and the Secretary-General. Shortly after his/her election, usually no later than early August, the President-elect sends a letter to all Member States announcing the theme for the upcoming general debate and inviting them to focus their speeches on the proposed theme.

The selected theme is then further enshrined in a document called “Arrangements for the high-level meetings and the general debate of the eightieth session of the General Assembly”.

2026, 81st Session of the UN General Assembly, President of the UN General Assembly [Khalilur Rahman](#) (Bangladesh): **“Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: A United Nations that Delivers for All”** (**according to the letter of 8th July 2026 of the PGA Annalena Baerbock transmitting a note verbale from the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations conveying the theme for the eighty-first session of the General Assembly chosen by the President-elect of the General Assembly; the theme is still to be enshrined in its final wording in the arrangements document*).

[2025](#), 80th Session of the UN General Assembly, President of the UN General Assembly [Annalena Baerbock](#) (Germany): **“Better together: 80 years and more for peace, development and human rights”**.

[2024](#), 79th Session of the UN General Assembly, President of the UN General Assembly [Philemon Yang](#) (Cameroon): **“Leaving no one behind: acting together for the advancement of peace, sustainable development and human dignity for present and future generation”**.

[2023](#), 78th Session of the UN General Assembly, President of the UN General Assembly [Dennis Francis](#) (Trinidad and Tobago): **“Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability for all”**.

[2022](#), 77th Session of the UN General Assembly, President of the UN General Assembly [Csaba Körösi](#) (Hungary): **“A watershed moment: transformative solutions to interlocking challenges”**.

2021, 76th Session of the UN General Assembly, President of the UN General Assembly Abdulla Shahid (Maldives): **“Building resilience through hope – to recover from COVID-19, rebuild sustainably, respond to the needs of the planet, respect the rights of people and revitalize the United Nations”.**

2020, 75th Session of the UN General Assembly, President of the UN General Assembly Volkan Bozkir (Türkiye): **“The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism – confronting COVID-19 through effective multilateral action”.**