

Luxembourg and the United Nations

A long-standing commitment to multilateral cooperation

A multicultural and multilingual State by its history, its geographical situation and the composition of its population, the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg has continuously based its foreign policy on an active participation in multilateral co-operation, on the regional level as well as on the international level, and is notably a founding member of the European Union, the Council of Europe, the OECD and the OSCE.

Convinced by the necessity of an approach based on the primacy of international law and on multilateral co-operation among sovereign and equal States for peace and development, respect for human rights and the solving of international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, it was only natural that Luxembourg became a founding member of the United Nations Organization.

A concrete contribution to the goals and principles of the Organization

Luxembourg proves its commitment to the UN, its goals and principles not only by honouring its financial obligations under the Charter, but also by making regular voluntary contributions to the Funds and Programmes of the United Nations, as well as by taking part in peace-keeping missions and pursuing an active policy of development co-operation.

Luxembourg's contribution currently ranks 50th, in absolute terms, and among the leading ones in per capita terms, to the regular budget and the budget of peace-keeping operations of the UN. It is notably the 20th donor to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the 18th to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the 18th to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the 14th to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the 14th to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the 23rd to the consolidated appeals by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the 19th to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the 24th to the World Food Programme (WFP). Luxembourg is furthermore the 20th donor in absolute terms to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the 20th donor to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

In the field of humanitarian assistance, Luxembourg has not only been actively involved in the framework of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and as the 13th contributor in absolute terms to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), but has also been invited in the past few years by the Presidency of the General Assembly to coordinate work on the humanitarian resolutions in view of their adoption by the Assembly.

Under the impetus of Luxembourg, which assumed the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the 11th time during the first semester of 2005, and in response to the urgent need to step up efforts in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the Member States of the European Union decided to commit to a substantial increase in official development aid (ODA), on the basis of a precise time-table, to collectively attain the goal of an ODA/GNI rate of 0.7% by 2015.

Today, Luxembourg comes second among the countries that exceed the United Nations target of 0.7 % of Gross National Income in official development assistance. In fact, in 2007, Luxembourg's ODA reached 0.92 % of GNI. Luxembourg's authorities are determined to continue this effort, and are aiming at an ODA level of 1 % of GNI in the years to come.

Furthermore, Luxembourg regularly takes an active part in peacekeeping operations. In the course of the last decade, Luxembourg troops notably contributed to UN efforts in ex-Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR, IFOR, SFOR and KFOR), in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and in Afghanistan (ISAF). In the context of the European Union's Security and Defence policy and its civilian and military crisis management policy, Luxembourg has, in the same way, assumed its share of responsibility by participating, i.a., in missions in ex-Yugoslavia, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in Chad and in the Gaza Strip.

Commitment to democracy and good governance, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms is another permanent feature of Luxembourg's diplomacy.

That is why Luxembourg has actively supported the transformation of the Commission on Human Rights into a Human Rights Council; the promotion of the notion of the responsibility to protect the population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity; the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission as well as efforts of the United Nations against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons. Luxembourg attaches great importance to UN efforts in the fields of disarmament, armament reduction and limitation of the risk of nuclear proliferation.

Peace and security, development and human rights are the three fundamental pillars of the United Nations. These fundamental values can only come to fruition and concrete expression through a functioning and credible multilateral system. Luxembourg is committed to the revitalization of the multilateral system, in particular through a reform of the United Nations which needs to be conducted with determination in order to strengthen the role of the United Nations in all domains covered by the three fundamental pillars.

A strong will to assume responsibility

Beyond the efforts it makes in the fields of development co-operation and peacekeeping, Luxembourg seeks to play an active role in the daily work of the UN and to assume responsibility within the various bodies of the Organization as foreseen, in particular, by the Charter of the United Nations.

Luxembourg has indeed been a member of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) three times, and is currently assuming the post of Vice-President of ECOSOC. Luxembourg has also been a member of the Commission on Human Rights and is sitting on the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) at present. Luxembourg took up a second one year mandate in the Coordination Council of the UNAIDS Programme as of January 1st, 2008. Luxembourg has in the same way played an active role on the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA as well as UNICEF and intends to continue doing so in the future. Luxembourg is a member of the Executive Board of UNESCO until October 2009. Luxembourg is also among the “Friends of the Alliance of civilizations”, as well as the “Friends of the Special Representative for children and armed conflict”, the “Friends of the International Criminal Court” and the “Friends on Climate Change”. Finally, acting as a facilitator for the President of the General Assembly, Luxembourg has striven to advance system-wide coherence within the UN system.

Since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, Luxembourg has been ceaselessly engaged in the fight against climate change, at the national, regional as well as international level. Luxembourg is determined to pursue these efforts in the future, in particular in view of the important events that lie ahead of us.

Luxembourg has shown solidarity and commitment within the UN, but has never had the honour to hold a seat on the Security Council. Luxembourg is ready to assume this responsibility. It is willing to serve the Security Council in carrying out the mission it has been entrusted with, that is, the maintenance of international peace and security, in full transparency and in respect of the principle of sovereign equality of States as defined in the Charter of the United Nations.

In accepting to fully assume the responsibilities that stem from its integration in the system of multilateral co-operation, and in the spirit of international solidarity, Luxembourg will abide by the statement of former Secretary General Kofi Annan who, in his report *“In Larger Freedom”*, underlines that *“Humanity will not enjoy security without development, it will not enjoy development without security, and it will not enjoy either without respect for human rights.”* It is in this spirit that Luxembourg hopes to be able to make a useful contribution to the Security Council of the United Nations in 2013-2014.