



## The United Nations and a World in Pain

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The 80th anniversary session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York began in September 2025 under the theme, “Better together: 80 years and more for peace, development and human rights.” This theme likely does not resonate in South America and the Caribbean as the United States extrajudicially kills civilians from the region on fishing boats in international waters, in violation of the use of force rules of the U.N. Charter. The U.N. has urged restraint while the United States claims the laws of war apply and summarily executes people without trial for unsubstantiated allegations of drug trafficking. “Better together” likely also comes across as empty rhetoric in Sudan, which currently faces the largest humanitarian crisis since recordkeeping began, where the U.N. has been engaged in longstanding conflict resolution efforts.

Additionally, the anniversary theme most certainly falls flat in Haiti, given the U.N.’s shameful history there. In 2010, peacekeepers charged with protecting Haitians were responsible for a deadly cholera epidemic which resulted in 800,000 cases and killed an estimated 10,000 Haitians. Despite Haiti having no history of cholera outbreaks, the U.N. took years to admit its role and did not provide effective remedy. Peacekeepers in Haiti also committed widespread rape, sexual abuse, and sexual exploitation of women and children without redress. One survivor surmised, “As far as the U.N. goes, they came here to protect us, but all they’ve brought is destruction.”