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Official Records

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

**Address by Mrs. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner,
President of the Argentine Republic**

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Argentine Republic.

Mrs. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Her Excellency Mrs. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, President of the Argentine Republic, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

President Fernández de Kirchner (*spoke in Spanish*): I must confess that, when I arrived in this city to participate in this session of the General Assembly, I had intended to begin my statement with a strong appeal on the need to rebuild multilateralism and cooperation as the two basic instruments to overcome what today is undoubtedly the central issue in our global discussion, namely, overcoming the social and economic crisis.

Mr. Berdymukhammedov (Turkmenistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

However, certain events on Monday and Tuesday oblige me to begin my statement by reporting that the Embassy of the Argentine Republic in Tegucigalpa, Republic of Honduras, had its electricity cut off some

two days ago. That, of course, was not because we had not paid the bill, but was for far more serious reasons.

Next to the Argentine Embassy is a television studio which broadcast the news of President Zelaya's arrival in Honduras, the repression and the demonstrations in favour of the return of democracy. That was one of the reasons. In any event, we have had better luck than the Embassy of the sister Republic of Brazil, where, at an early stage they cut off not only the electricity but the water as well — for having given shelter to the constitutional President, Manuel Zelaya.

As a Latin American, I must recall that not even in Chile during the dictatorship of General Pinochet, or in Argentina during the dictatorship of General Jorge Rafael Videla — perhaps the two cruelest dictatorships in Latin America — was there similar behaviour against embassies that were actively working to give shelter to refugees.

I say this because it is crucial that we realize that we must design and forge a multilateral strategy which is strong and specific to return democracy to Honduras. We need a strategy which would actually allow for true respect for human rights and ensure free and democratic elections — which can take place only with full respect for the constitution. If we do not do this, we would be setting a harsh precedent in a region where, for decades during the national security doctrine, suspensions of democracy claimed the lives of thousands and thousands of Latin Americans, led to the exile of many other and created the region's most serious economic and social tragedy in memory.

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I make this appeal because I played an active role from the platform of the Organization of American States, and also accompanied the former President of the General Assembly, Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, to El Salvador in order to carry out a task which would safeguard two basic values which, in my opinion, our region has managed to develop: democracy and respect for human rights.

Therefore, I believe that multilateralism would also mean understanding that we have to set common and general rules in this globalized world that must be accepted by all countries. In this case, we are faced with a cynical media coup which was carefully hidden or minimized because, in fact, it was slanted against the advent of populist progressive Governments in the region. I believe that, for all of us, defining multilateralism is going to require specific actions and rules so that absolutely all of us will have the same parameters when it comes time to judge conduct, attitudes and institutional situations.

Yesterday I took part in the climate change event convened by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in order to bring positions closer together with a view to the Copenhagen Conference, which will take place in a little more than 10 weeks' time. A decade and a half ago we agreed on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, dealing with environmental protection, and we later adopted the Kyoto Protocol in order to begin ensuring respect for those obligations undertaken by nations. A decade and a half later, it is clear that neither agreement is being satisfactorily implemented.

Essentially, this is sometimes because the nations most responsible for pollution and gas emissions, which should bear greater responsibility for reducing those emissions, in terms of investments both in their own countries and in developing countries, cannot come to an agreement either. As I was saying yesterday in our meeting, I think we need to understand that the only possibility of successfully approaching globalization lies precisely in the setting of common rules which would be respected by all nations, developed and developing.

In this framework, we should mention the situation of the Argentine Republic, where we still have a colonial enclave, our Malvinas Islands, which persists without the possibility of addressing the question of sovereignty together with the United

Kingdom, as proclaimed in many General Assembly resolutions. We were recently able to agree, following a humanitarian request, that family members with loved ones buried on the islands should be able to travel there by air to inaugurate a cenotaph to pay tribute to those who fought for their homeland.

All of this points to the very clear need to look at multilateralism not only as a type of rhetorical statement repeated every year in this or other multilateral forums, but rather in terms of concrete results. Otherwise, it will become increasingly complicated, with ever more unresolved problems. For, in the final analysis, the multilateralism we have been persistently proclaiming since 2003 has not been put into practice.

My country and the United States are the only two countries to have experienced attacks of international terrorism. For Argentina, the first was in 1992, at the Embassy of Israel, and the second was at the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA). Hundreds of people died in those attacks. Today, in this Assembly, I am joined by the head of AMIA, the entity that was bombed, as well as by family members who have accompanied him.

In 2007, then-President Néstor Kirchner came here to the Assembly (see A/62/PV.5) to call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to agree to extradite officials of its country wanted by the Argentine justice system in order to carry out a proper investigation and assign responsibility for that serious attack. Last year, I myself came here (see A/63/PV.5) to call once again on the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran to accede to our request. I said that there were constitutional guarantees in my country; that the principle that no one is guilty until proven guilty beyond a shadow of a doubt prevails from one end of my country to the other; and that we have guarantees for freedom and the administration of justice. Nevertheless, that did not happen. Instead, this year, one of the officials whose extradition was sought by the prosecutor on the case was promoted to minister.

I know that some 4, 5 or 15 speakers from now the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran will take the floor. Surely, he will once again deny tragedies that occurred in the course of western history in the twentieth century. He will surely invoke the threat of other imperialisms. And he will also surely invoke God. I would like to say to him that my country, the

Argentine Republic, is not an imperialist country — neither by way of belief nor as a reflection of our history. To the contrary, ours is a country that suffered from colonial oppression at its founding. During the world's bipolar era, we also suffered from the doctrine of national security. I would like to tell him that, like him, I believe in God. We may do so in different faiths but, in the end, I believe that neither of us believes that God could command us to prefer threats or to avoid justice from being done.

As President of the Argentine Republic, therefore, I humbly reiterate once again our appeal for the extradition of the officials whom Argentina's justice system believes are responsible — not to be found guilty, but to be judged and to be allowed to take advantage of all the rights and guarantees that every Argentine citizen and foreigner has in our country: guarantees under democracy, whose unconditional defence Argentina has made part of its institutional and historical core.

I would not wish to conclude without referring to three events that I believe are very positive, which I would like to share with the members of the Assembly today. The first took place quite recently, on 9 September, when the Argentine Republic received a visit from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, including its Chair and the President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. That visit occurred 30 years after the Court's first visit, during the dictatorship, when it came to investigate the crimes that were being committed and to take complaints from Argentine citizens — including our Minister for Foreign Affairs, who is with me today and who, like his father, was imprisoned at that time — and to hear testimony about the serious violations that were taking place.

Thirty years later, the men who comprised the Commission and the men and women who are its members today visited an Argentina where criminals responsible for genocide under the dictatorship are being tried by judges in accordance with the Constitution. We have also reached an agreement with the Inter-American Court to send a bill to our legislature — which I have already done — to eliminate the crime of libel and defamation against journalists. That is homage to the freedom of expression and of the press. But I also firmly believe that it should apply to all citizens. It is offensive that,

in the twenty-first century, someone could be sentenced to prison for having said something and said it freely.

We have also reached an agreement to send up two bills — which we have also already done — to contribute to the recovery of children born in captivity during the dictatorship. Those will include provisions to ensure respect for the victims, as well as on society's collective right to learn their identities.

The second thing that I would like to share has to do with the fact that I listened today to the President of the United States speak about an issue that is crucial to world peace and security, as well as to the rights of the Palestinian people. It is also a key component of a strategy against international terrorism, which, as ever, we continue to condemn. It is genuinely satisfying, and a salve to the soul, to hear from the mouth of the President of the United States of America that there is a need for the Palestinian people to be able to live on their land free of settlements of any kind, as well as, clearly, a right for Israel's citizens to live in peace within their borders. The words of the President and the timely message he delivered at Cairo University, which many here likely followed with interest, place us in a position that we have not occupied for many years, namely, the possibility of beginning negotiations — successful ones, I hope — between the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel to at last resolve a key issue for international peace and security, namely, the Palestinian question.

Lastly, I would like to tell the Assembly that, as a member of the Group of 20 (G-20), which will meet tomorrow in Pittsburgh, we would like to call for the presence of another multilateral body to be heard from at those meetings: the International Labour Organization. In the two previous G-20 meetings, there was a great deal of discussion about the financial crisis. However, as we did then, we continue to believe that a key issue is to once again discuss the real economy. That is why we believed it timely that workers and business owners, as genuine actors in the real economy and as catalysts to re-energizing it, should be heard from as well in those forums, alongside officials from multilateral credit institutions and the World Bank.

We are genuinely convinced that there is a need to build a new multilateralism in which all of us are genuinely on an equal footing; where rights and obligations and the road map for the course to be taken

are the same for rich and poor countries alike; and where the rights and responsibilities of developing countries are the same as those of developed States. We therefore agreed that equal rules of the game for the entire world was one of the basic elements of ensuring success in building multilateralism. If we do not achieve this, we will continue with these rhetorical exercises year after year, but we will never achieve the results that are not a right but an obligation for all of us who make up this body.

In conclusion, democracy, the defence of human rights, and equal rules for all countries in the world are the three key elements to building a new multilateralism. These three requirements must be equal and the same for all countries, but above all for those that, through their own actions and because of their level of social and economic development, lead the major developed countries of the world.

It is clear that those who have the greatest responsibility and hold the greatest leadership roles — won through military, technological, economic and even cultural power — also have an obligation to exercise that leadership in a responsible manner. This is what we, the developing and emerging countries, feel, and what we ask of the major nations of the world. They have the responsibility to build this world. This will no doubt be echoed in all our speeches, but this building must be done every day through our decisions and concrete actions.

The Acting President (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Argentine Republic for the statement she has just made.

Mrs. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan

The Acting President (*spoke in Russian*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to

welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Rahmon (*spoke in Tajik; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I should like to congratulate Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki on his election as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. I am confident that his extensive diplomatic experience and talent will contribute to the fruitful and successful work of the General Assembly at this session.

In recent decades, the world has made considerable progress in terms of technology, information and economic and social development, which, due to globalization, is being spread throughout the world. However, the negative aspects of this phenomenon, such as international terrorism, extremism, transnational organized crime, narcotics trafficking, pandemic outbreaks and emerging ecological challenges, pose a serious threat to the international community. The United Nations plays the key role in coordinating Member States' efforts to effectively meet the challenges of modern times and to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

Tajikistan regards peacekeeping as one of the most important aspects of the work of the United Nations. Last year, for the first time ever, citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan joined police forces in peacekeeping operations, contributing to efforts to strengthening peace and stability in conflict zones. A national strategy on the development of Tajikistan's peacekeeping capacity is currently being drafted.

Tajikistan attaches the utmost importance to strengthening the disarmament process. We hope that, at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, a constructive exchange of views will take place on urgent issues related to the practical implementation of that agreement. We are convinced that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is equally important at the regional and global levels. Tajikistan is therefore prepared to work to enhance its practical implementation of the provisions of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, which came into effect on 21 March 2009.

We support the leading role played by the United Nations in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We hope that important measures for

coordinating further steps in this direction will be developed at the next Biennial Meeting to be held on the Programme of Action.

Tajikistan supports the efforts of the international community to achieve the comprehensive prohibition of the use of anti-personnel mines. For our part, we are meeting our commitments under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, by providing mine-risk information to the Secretary-General on an annual basis.

The first international conference to address the issues of the consequences of landmines was held in Dushanbe, the capital of my country, in June 2009. Tajikistan has long suffered the effects of landmines. We believe that Central Asia must be free from the threat of mines and we call upon the international community to do its utmost to achieve this noble goal.

The international community continues to fight terrorism, extremism, transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking. These combined threats give rise to greater concerns. We therefore consider it essential to expedite the adoption of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Double standards must be avoided in this endeavour, since terrorism has no national or religious affiliations.

The prevention of illicit drug trafficking is an integral part of the common struggle against terrorism. Tajikistan has developed bilateral, regional and multilateral short- and long-term programmes of action, and ratified approximately 30 intergovernmental agreements.

The Drug Control Agency established by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, with the active involvement of the United Nations, has now been in existence for over a decade. The total value of heroin seized during these years, in terms of its average price in Europe, is estimated at \$1.12 billion. This initiative has helped save more than 36 million lives from drug addiction. The Tajik initiative to establish an anti-narcotics security belt around Afghanistan was launched from the lofty podium of the General Assembly at its twentieth special session in 1998.

We believe that rendering assistance to Afghanistan's target programmes could be one way to counteract the drug threat emanating from that country. Regrettably, the efforts undertaken to date and the

resources allocated by the international community to address this challenge have not always been sufficient to counteract the increasingly aggressive spread of narcotics. In our view, the borders of the countries neighbouring Afghanistan should be regarded as the front line in this struggle, and efforts to reinforce that line should be enhanced. For many years, Tajikistan has acted as a buffer zone against the spread and export of narcotics, terrorism, extremism and other negative phenomena emanating from this area.

We are profoundly interested in strengthening lasting peace and stability in our neighbour Afghanistan because the security of Central Asia depends in every respect on the situation in Afghanistan. Today, it is obvious that the Afghan issue cannot be resolved by military means alone, but requires a comprehensive approach taking into account all the many factors involved. First and foremost, social and educational projects and programmes should be implemented in that country. We support the current efforts at peaceful rehabilitation and believe that the international strategy of action in Afghanistan should to a larger extent rely upon the Afghan people themselves, and that priority should be given to ensuring close and efficient cooperation with the country's authorities.

The world situation is rapidly changing because of the financial and economic crisis. It not only undermines our efforts and capacity to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, but imposes new and complex tasks. We highly appreciate the United Nations role and efforts to address the current threefold crisis and mitigate its consequences.

It is well known that the global financial and economic crisis was caused primarily by the most advanced and wealthy countries, which unreasonably inflated banking assets on the basis of unsecured loans. We therefore believe that these countries must bear their share of responsibility towards the developing countries, whose already difficult situation was further aggravated by the global financial crisis. Partial write-offs of the debts incurred during the crisis, ongoing increases in donor assistance and rational management of labour migration would be very helpful in this situation. In my opinion, it is high time for a number of forums to be replaced by practical support for the efforts of the developing countries to mitigate and overcome the impact of the crisis. If the crisis should

persist over the long term, it may be fraught with ever-more serious consequences.

Along with other Member States, Tajikistan supported the outcome of the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development. We highly appreciate the efforts undertaken by the High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, and deem it necessary to enhance assistance to the developing countries in the form of financial and economic support and the transfer of modern technology and seed stocks.

Meanwhile, in our opinion the efforts to solve the problems caused by the energy crisis have not been successful enough. We believe that, along with the Millennium Development Goals, access to energy should be given top priority. Tajikistan, which ranks eighth in the world in terms of available hydropower resources — the total amount of which is estimated at 527 billion kilowatt hours — currently utilizes less than 5 per cent of its potential, and over the past 18 years has endured a chronic energy crisis for eight months of every year, primarily in autumn and winter. In recent years, the electricity shortage has been exacerbated by abnormally severe and long winters, the result of climate change. It is perfectly logical that, in the absence of explored hydrocarbon resources, Tajikistan should develop its hydropower engineering in a concerted and comprehensive manner.

The completion of the construction of a number of small, medium-size and large hydropower stations will help to provide energy not only to the whole of Central Asia, but to neighbouring countries as well. In this regard, the implementation of such regional projects as the Central Asia-South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade Project will define the development prospects of our vast region, which includes Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The ever-increasing need for cost-efficient and environmentally sound energy requires the construction of hydropower stations and water reservoirs, which are essential to providing reliable volumes of water, especially in years of drought. As hydropower facilities generate energy by utilizing water rather than by consuming it, hydropower engineering plays an important role in developing energy production and the socio-economic sphere, as well as in environmental

protection not only in Tajikistan but in the entire Central Asian region.

Global climate change requires a comprehensive and integrated approach to the use of natural resources. We are deeply convinced that the Copenhagen meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will endorse a new comprehensive agreement on this issue.

Every year, natural disasters cause severe damage to agriculture, the environment and the entire economy of countries such as ours. In Tajikistan, 93 per cent of the terrain consists of mountains. The damage done to our country's economy in recent years by such natural disasters as mud flows, landslides and floods is estimated at hundreds of millions of United States dollars. Tragically, that damage entails human casualties.

An assessment of the impact of climate change on Tajikistan's glaciers has shown that, during the period of observation begun in 1930, the total area of the glaciers has been reduced by approximately one third. Since glaciers and snowcaps are the main sources for water runoff into the rivers, there is a probability that in the near future river capacity will be diminished by 5 to 15 per cent. At the same time, water consumption has increased, due to demographic growth and the expansion of areas of irrigation. In the previous century alone, the total area of irrigated land increased from 2.5 million to 9 million hectares, while the population of Central Asia grew from 20 million in 1956 to 63 million people today. In these circumstances, the countries of the region should review their programmes and strategies with regard to water use, especially in agriculture, and take consolidated and concerted action to promote sustainable development.

From this lofty rostrum, we should like once again to remind everyone of the problems caused by the degradation of the Aral Sea. The large-scale use of land for cultivating such agricultural crops as cotton and rice, which consume a great deal of water, has become the primary cause of this ecological disaster.

The most reasonable solution to the current situation, which is characterized by the salinization of soil and the irretrievable loss of 30 to 60 per cent of irrigation water, would be to adopt specific water-saving measures, such as the rehabilitation of irrigation systems, the reclamation of irrigated land, the

introduction of advanced irrigation technologies and the partial replacement of cotton and rice with crops that consume less water, which would also help to address the food crisis issue.

Only an integrated and mutually beneficial approach of the countries of the region towards the use of water energy and other natural resources can help to resolve the interrelated energy, food and environment problems and to ensure the sustainable development of all Central Asian countries. It is no secret that humankind is already facing a shortage of safe drinking water, which is not accessible to more than 1 billion people on the planet, while in some countries the price of freshwater currently exceeds that of petrol.

As a country that has one of the largest amounts of freshwater resources in the world, Tajikistan is convinced that creating an economic mechanism for the cross-flow of water and energy resources between upstream countries that are rich in water resources and downstream countries where hydrocarbon deposits are primarily located would promote long-term mutually beneficial cooperation among those States.

Having put forward the idea of using safe drinking water from Lake Sarez to meet the needs of the population of the entire region, we propose specific measures in that area. We hope that the United Nations and other international organizations, regional commissions and relevant institutions can offer constructive and unwavering assistance on that issue, which is of utmost significance to our region.

As the initiator of the International Year of Freshwater 2003 and the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015, Tajikistan believes that it is of paramount importance to expedite the implementation of the United Nations water agenda and to enhance it by achieving the Decade goals. World Water Day on 22 March 2010 will mark the fifth year since the commencement of the Water Decade. In that regard, Tajikistan proposes holding on that day a high-level dialogue of the General Assembly to discuss the implementation of the international water Decade and the Millennium Development Goals on water and sanitation. That event could be a milestone in the midterm review of the implementation of half of the Decade and evaluation of the progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

My Government has already put forward a proposal to hold a conference for a midterm review in

Dushanbe in 2010 that would serve as one of the preparatory events for the United Nations millennium review summit in 2010. I hope that that initiative will find understanding among and receive support from all Member States.

Bearing in mind the water crisis, which has been aggravated by population growth and global climate change, the international community should take specific measures to ensure the fair and integrated use of water resources in order to meet the needs of the people, environment and economies of all countries around the world. To that end, the Republic of Tajikistan has proposed declaring 2012 international year of water diplomacy, with the aim of developing, within the United Nations, further coordinated steps towards the rational use of water resources at the national, regional and international levels. Our country intends to further promote that issue at the General Assembly, and hopes for the support of all Member States.

Next year will mark the beginning of the third five-year term on the way towards the international community's achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The year 2010 will be a landmark in the assessment of our efforts to meet global challenges, overcome difficulties and evaluate the progress in attaining the goals outlined in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that, as an advocate of broad-based cooperation, Tajikistan believes that only collective and coordinated efforts and effective regional and international cooperation can serve as a foundation for our common success in that area. The mutual understanding and cooperation that have prevailed in this Organization since its establishment remain the only way to a bright and clear future and to universal peace and prosperity.

The Acting President (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Tajikistan for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China

The Acting President (*spoke in Russian*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Hu Jintao (*spoke in Chinese*): The world today is undergoing major developments, major changes and major adjustments. The trend towards peace, development and cooperation, which represents the call of our times, has grown stronger than ever. As the world moves further towards multipolarity and economic globalization, multilateralism and democracy in international relations have won greater popular support, while openness and cooperation for mutual benefit and win-win progress have become the shared aspirations of the international community. Countries have become more interdependent.

At the same time, the world remains in the grip of the financial crisis, and the prospects for economic recovery are still not clear. Worldwide, unemployment and poverty are worsening, and development imbalances are more acute. Global issues such as climate change, food security, energy and resource security, and public health security have been thrown into sharp relief. Non-traditional security threats, including terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, transnational organized crime and major communicable diseases, are threatening our world. Some long-standing hotspot issues remain unresolved, while regional and local conflicts continue to flare up. The instability and uncertainties on the international landscape pose severe challenges to world peace and development.

In the face of unprecedented opportunities and challenges, we members of the international community should commit ourselves to peace, development, cooperation, common progress and tolerance, and continue our joint endeavour to build a harmonious world of enduring peace and common

prosperity and contribute to the noble cause of the peace and development of humankind.

First, we should view security in a broader perspective and safeguard world peace and stability. The security of all countries has never been as closely interconnected as it is today. Security is not a zero-sum game, and there is no isolated or absolute security. No country can be safe and stable in the absence of world and regional peace and stability.

We should embrace a new security mindset of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination. While maintaining our own national security, we should also respect the security concerns of other countries and advance the common security of humankind. We should adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and seek peaceful solutions to regional hotspot issues and international disputes. There should be no wilful use or threat of force. We should support the United Nations in continuing to play an important role in the field of international security. We should oppose terrorism, separatism and extremism in all their manifestations and broaden international security cooperation.

China has consistently stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and for a world without nuclear weapons. We call on the international community to take credible steps to push forward the nuclear disarmament process, eradicate the risks of nuclear weapons proliferation and promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy and related international cooperation.

Secondly, we should take a more holistic approach to development and promote common prosperity. Increasing economic globalization has linked the development of all countries closely together. Without the development and equal participation of developing countries, there can be neither common prosperity in the world nor a more just and equitable international economic order. The developing countries now face a deteriorating external environment brought about by the international financial crisis. Their economies are slowing down, and their development endeavours are beset by serious difficulties.

We believe that common development is an important way to redress global development imbalances and achieve sustainable development. The United Nations should increase its input in

development; advance economic globalization in the direction of balanced development, shared benefits and win-win progress; and foster an international environment conducive to the development of developing countries. The international financial institutions should use their newly increased resources, first and foremost, to help developing countries move out of poverty and provide loans to them in a more flexible, diverse, convenient and efficient manner. Great effort should be made to increase the representation and voice of developing countries in the process of reforming the international financial system.

We should take responsible measures to counter the international financial crisis, firmly oppose protectionism and actively work for an early, comprehensive and balanced outcome of the Doha Round negotiations. Developed countries should open their markets to developing countries and reduce or exempt tariffs for those countries. They should honour their official development assistance and debt relief commitments and, in particular, increase assistance to the least developed countries, with a focus on tackling such issues as hunger, health care and education.

For developing countries, self-reliance is essential. They should explore development models conducive to their development and poverty eradication efforts. It is also in their interest to increase trade and investment cooperation, open markets to one another and step up South-South cooperation.

Thirdly, we should pursue cooperation with a more open mind and work for mutual benefit and common progress. Climate change, food security, energy and resource security, and public health security are all global challenges, and no country is immune to them. The only way for us to meet those challenges and ensure harmony and peace is to engage in closer international cooperation.

Climate change is one of the serious challenges to human survival and development, and international cooperation is the key to tackling that challenge. We should retain the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol as the main channel in addressing climate change, abide by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, adhere to the mandate of the Bali Road Map, and work for the success of the Copenhagen conference with a view to achieving mutual benefit and common progress.

Food and energy are vital to the livelihood, development and stability of all nations. We should increase our input into agriculture, develop advanced technologies, curb market speculation, increase food assistance and intensify cooperation with regard to agriculture and food. We should strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation in the area of energy, step up the research and development of new and renewable energies, put in place a system for the research, development and dissemination of advanced energy technologies, and diversify the energy supply.

The continued spread of influenza A — H1N1 — has presented a global public health challenge confronting the entire international community. China is ready to provide help, within its capacities, to other developing countries in the prevention and control of influenza A.

Fourthly, we should be more tolerant towards one another and live together in harmony. Mutual learning and tolerance among different civilizations are an inexhaustible source of strength for social progress, and all countries — large or small, strong or weak, rich or poor — are equal. We should acknowledge differences in our cultural traditions, social systems and values, respect the right of all countries to independently choose their own development paths, let different civilizations and models of development draw on one another's strengths through competition and comparison, and achieve common development by seeking common ground while reserving the right to differ.

The Chinese people will soon celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Sixty years ago, the Chinese people won independence and liberation after a prolonged, hard struggle and became masters of the new China. Today, China's national strength has grown remarkably and the people are better off.

China's development has contributed greatly to peace and development in the world, and China's future is more closely interconnected with that of the world. A more developed China will make greater contributions and bring more opportunities to the world. We are committed to the path of peaceful development and the win-win strategy of opening up. We will develop friendly relations and cooperation with all countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. China has always been and will

continue to be a positive force for world peace and common development.

As a responsible and major developing country, China has always made common development an important aspect of its foreign policy. We have made a great effort to provide support and assistance to other developing countries. To further assist them, China will adopt the following measures.

First, we will increase support for other developing countries hit hard by the financial crisis, honestly implement relevant capital increase and financing plans, intensify trade and investment cooperation and help increase the capacity of relevant countries for risk resistance and sustainable development.

Secondly, we will continue to implement the measures announced at the United Nations High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals to assist other developing countries in accelerating development and facilitating attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Thirdly, China will follow through on the measures to help African countries that were announced at the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, increase assistance to Africa, reduce or cancel debts for African countries, expand trade and investment, provide human resources and technological support for African countries in such areas as agriculture, health, education and disaster preparedness and reduction, and intensify personnel training tailored to African needs.

Fourthly, China will continue to participate in and promote regional monetary and financial cooperation, maintain financial and economic stability and promote financial cooperation and trade in the region.

Let us join hands, share the development opportunities, rise above the challenges and make an unremitting effort towards building a harmonious world of enduring peace and common prosperity.

The Acting President (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the People's Republic of China for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Mr. Grauls (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Address by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco.

His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Prince Albert (*spoke in French*): My participation in this general debate, like that of more than 100 heads of State and Government, confirms both the seriousness of the choices we must make in the face of the challenges confronting our States and the unavoidable role of the United Nations in deciding on the future of our planet and its inhabitants.

More than ever before, the General Assembly must be the "centre for harmonizing the actions of nations" in the attainment of the common ends defined in Article 1 of the Charter. To remain the vital centre, the Organization and its most representative body of the community of nations — our General Assembly — must better take into consideration the interdependence that links our destinies and the opportunity presented to our sovereign States to bestow upon our fellow countrymen a common vision marked by moral values.

The financial storm that swept through the world a year ago has caused too much suffering and too much harm to the global economy, at a time in our history when we are confronted with the major challenges of the climate crisis and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), for us not to draw obvious conclusions.

A year from now, we will meet again in this same forum to take stock of the progress we have made in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The 2015 deadline — which already seemed compromised on the eve of this multidimensional crisis — requires that we define a global vision for the future of humankind. Some will call it solidarity or moral awareness. Whatever the

name, we need to clearly define and implement the MDGs to meet the basic needs of all human beings.

If poverty eradication is to remain our priority, we will have to get busy on fulfilling our obligations, for the most destitute are also the ones who are hungry, who suffer from malnutrition and who lack access to water and to basic social and health services. Among the main victims are women and children, 25,000 of whom die each day, according to UNICEF.

Several hundred thousand people today benefit from actions undertaken by my country in the framework of its international cooperation in the fields of health, education and the fight against poverty. This is why I requested that we continue our effort to contribute 0.7 per cent of our GDP by 2015 to official development assistance. This assistance must not be sacrificed because of the present economic and financial situation. On the contrary, it must be strengthened at a time when the most vulnerable are the ones who need it the most. This development assistance must be accompanied by long-term investments aimed at strengthening the capacity-building of developing countries, in particular through the transfer of appropriate technologies with a view to respecting the requirements of sustainable development.

From this perspective, and in the light of the recent food crisis, the time is right to restore agriculture to its proper place, because food security depends on it. Today, it is up to us to forge for future generations a new destiny, "a new deal". We must move from being donors to become partners in a green revolution in Africa, where food-producing agriculture adapted to the specific conditions of the continent must empower the local populations.

The restoration of agriculture to the heart of our civilization also raises the crucial issue of water. Whether regarding access to it for the survival of our populations, for farming or for energy production, it is imperative to guarantee water security. Therefore, an integrated management of water resources is needed. We must be aware of the potential disasters and conflicts that would arise if we failed, and of risks linked to poor sanitation that could cause outbreaks of infectious diseases and pandemics.

The phenomena of desertification and drought, as well as the acidification of seas and oceans, are exacerbated by man-made climatic change. This is why

failure of the Copenhagen negotiations is not an option. My commitment, and that of my worldwide counterparts, as stated yesterday in the framework of the climate change summit convened by the Secretary-General, is unequivocal: we must, together — developed countries, countries with high carbon dioxide emissions and developing countries — succeed in defining a post-Kyoto regime that will be decidedly in line with a low-carbon-emission future.

For too long, we have neglected the scientific warnings. More than 20 years ago, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was created by the World Meteorological Organization. During the third World Climate Conference at the beginning of September which, with great pleasure, I attended, it was decided to establish a Global Framework for Climate Services, with a view to helping populations meet this increasingly pressing challenge.

This Global Framework, which we fully support, aims at improving the management of the risks of climate fluctuations and climate change as well as adaptation to climate change at all levels, through development and the incorporation of science-based information and forecasting into policies and planning. The unparalleled mobilization of public opinion compels us to adopt innovative measures to slow global warming, whose consequences could be catastrophic.

The Trade and Development Report recommends deep structural changes, which will not happen unless we are willing to challenge our patterns of production and consumption. The setting up of a green economy must be the basis of such a process. Our role, as political decision makers, is to ensure that the necessary technology — which already exists — is put to use to reduce greenhouse gases. Sustainable development requires the globalization of green technologies and environmental assets.

On behalf of the Principality, I reiterate our stated ambition to become carbon neutral and our resolve to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent by 2020 and by 60 per cent by 2050.

During these past few months, the world economy has been sorely tried and tested. Signs of recovery are beginning to show, but we must draw lessons from this grim year. The globalization of the economy and the resulting interdependence require

reform of the international monetary and financial system.

Created 10 years ago, the Group of 20 (G-20) met for the first time at the level of heads of State or Government last November, thereby acknowledging the urgency of adopting measures to save the world economy from a disaster worsened by the panic reigning in the financial markets. Monaco acknowledges that this group, which represents two thirds of the world's population and trade and close to 90 per cent of the world gross domestic product, bears special responsibility vis-à-vis the rest of the international community.

We are confident of the capacity of the G-20, tomorrow in Pittsburgh, to lay the foundations for a new era encompassing, inter alia, financial regulation, financial traders' income, governance and resources allocated to international financial institutions. The G-20's ability to bring together all States will give rise to the legitimacy necessary for renewed growth.

For several months, my Government has been working to fulfil the commitments it undertook and to comply with the required norms of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) with a view to improve transparency and exchanges of fiscal and banking information. That is why my Government has already signed 12 bilateral conventions and has undertaken to conclude other agreements in this area. As of today, Monaco has had its efforts acknowledged by the OECD and will thus now be included on its White List.

But let us make no mistake: the breach of trust resulting from the financial disaster has made it more necessary than ever before that the measures taken by the G-20 be non-discriminatory and bring together all Member States. A consultative body would thus ensure the legitimacy of any decisions made.

We must, together, rebuild solid foundations for a capitalism with a human face that promotes growth and social development. Current circumstances have provided us the opportunity to create a green economy, one which associates job creation with the transfer of new technologies which will enable us to achieve a sustained recovery.

The State must continuously adapt its role and the expression of its sovereignty to new realities in order to remain the guarantor of the security and social well-

being of populations. The United Nations cannot avoid this either. Since its creation, the Organization has worked for the maintenance of international peace and security through operations led under its flag. It has also played a prominent federative role in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Human and material resources available to peacekeeping operations have reached levels that would have not been conceivable only a decade ago. The necessary consideration of this matter initiated within the Security Council and the Secretariat, as well as with Member States, is a priority and we support it.

What is just as important is the strengthening of the rule of law and of democratic institutions, guardians of sovereignty and the peaceful coexistence of States. In this respect, I wish to reiterate the support of my country for the implementation of the responsibility to protect, which is symbolic of the strengthening of multilateralism for the good of populations. The responsibility to protect does not affect the exercise of responsible sovereignty, which places the individual at the forefront. Monaco will continue to work with its partners — that is, each and every one in this Hall — to implement best practices in the field of protection, international assistance and capacity-building, with the sole objective of saving lives.

The Principality will keep responding, in solidarity, to emergency humanitarian situations, especially when it comes to assisting women and children, whose vulnerability in crisis situations, unfortunately, no longer needs to be demonstrated.

In 2010, we will celebrate the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures and the International Year of Biodiversity. These themes symbolize, at the outset of the twenty-first century, the harmony that we must seek both among our people — with acceptance of our differences — and between the human species and the other living species on Earth, which we have the duty to protect and save from extinction.

I can assure the Assembly that my country will continue to tirelessly commit itself to processes likely to build and strengthen the ties between our societies in order to promote dialogue and cultural and religious understanding based on mutual respect, such as the Union for the Mediterranean and the Alliance of Civilizations.

I am convinced that the President's great experience at the United Nations and his role in the creation of the African Union are great pluses for the success of his very sensitive mission.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of the Principality of Monaco for the statement he has just made.

Prince Albert II of the Principality of Monaco was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Alvaro Uribe Vélez, President of the Republic of Colombia

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Colombia.

Mr. Alvaro Uribe Vélez, President of the Republic of Colombia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Alvaro Uribe Vélez, President of the Republic of Colombia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Uribe Vélez (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly and reiterate to the United Nations our gratitude for its positive presence and cooperation with the Colombian people.

The Government over which I preside aims to enhance the confidence of the national and international community in Colombia. This quest for confidence is based on three pillars: security with democratic values, the promotion of investment and entrepreneurship with social responsibility, and social cohesion with freedoms.

We continue with our security advances, but also there are some outstanding challenges. I would like to highlight some intangible achievements that attest to the democratic credentials of our security project.

We have recovered two monopolies that we should never have lost: the monopoly of institutional forces to fight criminals and the monopoly of justice that the terrorists tried to dislodge. We have dismantled paramilitarism, a term that emerged to describe private criminal gangs whose objective was to fight drug-

trafficking guerrillas. Today, the State is the only entity that fights all those criminals. Those criminals in all their forms — narco-guerrillas, criminal gangs — are part of a mafia-type relationship that unites them or pits them against each other to distribute or fight over the gains of the criminal drug business.

Justice, with the Supreme Court that was attacked in 1985 by drug traffickers and guerrillas; justice, which was tormented by the threats to and assassination of judges and was dislodged in many regions by the terrorists leaders of guerrillas and paramilitary groups that attempted to replace it; justice has, throughout the entire country, regained its full effectiveness.

Victims did not complain out of fear of retaliation or because they thought it was pointless. Now, thanks to the recovery of our security, we have registered 239,758 victims, whose situations we are determined to remedy, a remedy that is never complete but which will lead little by little to reconciliation by overcoming of the spirit of vengeance and hatred.

We have regained the independence of decentralization and of political exercise. Terrorism had displaced 30 per cent of our mayors, stolen and corrupted municipal and departmental budgets and exercised coercion within the public sector. Mayors have regained their security so that they may freely carry out their duties and transparently manage their resources. Politics is now expressed freely in all spectrums of thought. This terrorist threat has been tackled without martial law, with full civil and political guarantees and absolute respect for the freedom that we promote with security.

We are working to improve the effectiveness of our public forces as well as respect for human rights. We do not hesitate to punish those who violate them, but neither do we refrain from defending our soldiers and policemen who sometimes have been victims of a dirty legal war. Colombia has voluntarily presented itself to a United Nations human rights review.

Furthermore, despite the suffering caused by landmines that had been planted by terrorist groups, the State destroyed those that were used by its public forces for training purposes. Our country is one of the leaders of the Ottawa Convention to destroy these landmines and will host the next meeting of States parties in Cartagena.

We tackle terrorism with the utmost determination, and we practise democracy fervently. That is why the doors of Colombia have been open without restriction to international vigilance. We deliberate and disagree, but both impartial observers and biased critics have had complete freedom to express themselves in Colombia.

Our interest does not lie in the fanatical confrontation between left and right, which is as dangerous as it is obsolete. Rather, we are betting on a modern democracy, a democracy that is safe and free, that builds social cohesion, a democracy with independent institutions and with confidence that stems from the transparency that is based on a high level of civic participation.

We have not been able to completely overcome the problem of displacement, but we have increased our budget twelvefold to help displaced persons. We promote trust between public forces and communities so that those who fight drug trafficking are not thwarted by the displacement that is caused by drug traffickers.

We have demobilized 51,783 members of terrorist groups, whose numbers have dropped from around 60,000 to fewer than 8,000. We have been extremely generous with those who have been demobilized and extremely severe with the 7 per cent who have returned to crime. The Justice and Peace Law, which covers them, made it possible to report 29,555 criminal acts, 12,104 confessions, the discovery of 2,043 graves with 2,492 corpses, the identification of 708 bodies and the return of 581 to their families. The participation of victims and new procedures for restitution and restoration of their rights are a decisive component of this demobilization process.

Terrorism cannot be ignored in the name of good international relations. To the contrary, multilateralism and diplomacy must lead to collaborative action among States to overcome this tragedy and its corollaries, including arms trafficking, illicit drugs, money and asset laundering and terrorist havens.

We reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism in all its legitimate expressions, from organizations of neighbouring countries to the most global Organization, but we believe that multilateralism must demonstrate that it is effective in defeating international crime.

Colombia has acknowledged its internal problem of narco-terrorism. We have carried out a heroic struggle that will ultimately prevail. We cooperate with the international community and we ask for more effective cooperation. We are cooperating with Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Afghanistan and other countries. We acknowledge the efforts of the United States to work together with us to make progress in dismantling narco-terrorism. We request greater cooperation from more countries and from the international community. Our objective is to restore domestic security and never to participate in the arms race for the bloody game of international warfare. Our tradition is one of respect for the global community.

We are concerned that, instead of progress towards greater cooperation to ensure the security, peace and tranquillity of the citizens of all countries, there is an acceleration of the arms race. Some justify it by citing the need to modernize their military equipment, while others admit their desire for war.

Multilateral agencies, led by the United Nations, must strengthen their action so that Governments will fulfil their duty to protect their citizens and their obligation not to attack the international community.

In Colombia, the only reason for terrorism is the drug trade. Its violent criminals used to deny being involved in narco-terrorism and to try to appear ideological; today, having lost all sense of decency, they cannot hide their criminal enterprise or feign ideological postures, which are negated by their cruelty towards their victims and those whom they have kidnapped. The democratic transparency of our country, which they tried to destroy, ensures that they will never be acceptable.

We have a different view of co-responsibility and of the proposal that drugs be legalized. The former division between producer and consumer countries has disappeared. Colombia began as a trafficking territory, burst into production and now suffers as a consumer. Those who began as consumers increase production. All peoples are exposed to the risks of drug production, trafficking and consumption. Co-responsibility must thus be exercised in accordance with its real meaning: a task that belongs to all of us, without any reservations.

We believe that, instead of advocating the legalization of drugs, we should consider the need to

criminalize consumption. There is no consistency between toughness when it comes to production and trafficking and permissiveness when it comes to consumption. That has led to deadly micro-trafficking in cities, the promotion of consumption by adolescents and young people and the involvement of children in the criminal trade. We are making progress in the constitutional process of criminalizing consumption, taking care not to confuse the sick addict with the criminal distributor.

Our Government is promoting investment and entrepreneurship as ways to overcome poverty and build equity. Colombia is moving forward in terms of competitiveness and confidence. Investment must perform a function of social responsibility to acquire popular legitimacy in democratic societies. Social responsibility — not speculation — is inseparable from capital as a significant factor in social-wealth creation. The economic crisis is a crisis of speculation, rather than of creative free enterprise. We are confident that the necessary conventions will be adopted to avoid the risks created by speculative money transfers and financial market speculation. We fear a new era of protectionism and the selective closure of developed economies, which would impede sustainable economic recovery.

Social responsibility is inseparable from the fight against climate change. Colombia is a net producer of oxygen and emits insignificant amounts of carbon dioxide. However, we are highly vulnerable, as shown by the winter tragedies in recent years, which have caused losses in terms of human life, production and high service costs. We support tougher international conventions to protect the environment. We hope that the Copenhagen conference will produce effective binding instruments so that it will not be another dead letter.

Our main contribution to the fight against climate change is the preservation of our 578,000-square-kilometre rainforest, which constitutes more than 51 per cent of our national territory and the majority of which lies along the Amazon. We have as a concrete policy the forest ranger family programme, which has involved more than 90,000 rural families in the collective effort to protect the rainforest, keep it free from the shadow of illicit drugs and ensure its recovery where it has been destroyed. The State pays a bonus to those families. The programme, supervised by the

United Nations, has received the highest rating from the Organization.

In Colombia, forest ranger families protect the Amazon rainforest from predatory drugs; elsewhere in the world, a similar model could preserve trees in order to mitigate climate change.

Clean energy, mass transportation systems and the protection of water sources are essential actions in our contribution to the fight against global warming. Colombia, at more than 1 million litres per day, is the second-largest Latin American producer of ethanol from sugar cane and, at 1.8 million litres per day, the largest producer of biodiesel from African palm. The conditions in our country make it possible to increase those outputs without destroying the rainforest or limiting food security.

We have introduced incentives for other clean energies such as solar and wind energy, the development of which remains small despite their great potential.

We are working on building nine mass transportation systems in major cities and are now in the process of incorporating another 10 that are proportionally sized, with a view to replacing individual transportation with collective transportation.

Eleven per cent of our national territory has been designated a protected area. In natural sanctuaries such as the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, which is the highest coastal sanctuary in the world, agreements with indigenous communities are being implemented. In exchange for security, the recovery of lands and the building of seven out of nine promised villages, they have once again taken over the noble task of preserving forests and water sources.

We gain nothing from security, investment, health, education or any other social cohesion policy if we do not attach equal importance to the environment. We understand this in a “mega-diverse” nation that contains 14 per cent of the planet’s diversity and ranks second — behind Brazil — in terms of plant and animal species and first in terms of amphibians and birds.

Our fervent desire is to increase the Human Opportunity Index in order to eliminate poverty, build equity and guarantee every possible alternative for new generations. We propose to include in the measuring of the Index progress and setbacks in environmental

policies. Opportunities are pointless without environmental protection. Let us be effective in our fight against climate change so that we do not condemn the future inhabitants of the Earth to a planetary holocaust.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Colombia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Alvaro Uribe Vélez, President of the Republic of Colombia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Dmitry Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Dmitry Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Dmitry Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Medvedev (*spoke in Russian*): Today, speaking from this high rostrum, I would like to highlight five topics that are, in my view, important to all of us and our common approaches to the international agenda.

The first is the timing of this meeting and the moment that humankind is currently experiencing. This session of the General Assembly is taking place at a very critical and complex time. It can be said without exaggeration that we are living through one of the watershed moments of modern history. Besides the economic crisis — the first large-scale crisis of the era of globalization — global development as a whole continues to be threatened by regional and local conflicts, terrorism, cross-border crime, food shortages and climate change. The impact of the crisis continues to be felt by most countries of the world. Although so far we have been able, it seems, to avoid the very worst scenarios, the question remains: how to overcome the huge imbalances and deficits — amounting to trillions

of dollars — accumulated in the global and national economies.

Our collective agenda for unification has been dictated by life itself, which also dictates the growing need for the United Nations as a time-tested mechanism for harmonizing the interests of different States and peoples. As never before, we are feeling the need for informal collective leadership and for an increased role for such platforms as the G-8 and the more recent G-20, as well as other negotiation and mediation forums, and all the more because these operate not on a model of opposition, but rather to advance the converging interests of their participants.

At this morning's meeting, the President of the United States addressed this Assembly, and I would like to endorse one of the thoughts he voiced. He stated that no single country can or should attempt to dominate others, and that is absolutely true. However, these agreed approaches need to be implemented in some way, including through the United Nations system.

Another distinctive feature of modern times is the increasing role of regional entities, which are growing more active on every continent. This trend is entirely consistent with the principles of the United Nations. Russia, for its part — together with its partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States, in the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and with its fellow BRIC countries Brazil, India and China — will continue to bolster the mechanisms of regional interaction. These mechanisms facilitate a collective response to common threats, while mitigating the consequences of the crisis for our citizens and increasing the sustainability of our national economies.

Secondly, I want to touch on the issue of existing problems. Allow me to dwell on those that cannot be effectively addressed without the participation or outside the framework of the United Nations. The first task in this regard is to address the imbalance of existing mechanisms of global economic governance, the inadequacy of their rules of the game, and the chasm between the financial markets and the real economy. We need to make joint efforts to establish financial and economic models that will protect all of us from such turmoil in the future.

Virtually all countries have seen a drop in output and in the standards of living of millions of their

citizens. The crisis has exacerbated social problems, painfully tested young people at the very start of their lives, and caused significant growth in unemployment in all countries. Russia is no exception in this.

A painful blow has been delivered to our plans to alleviate poverty. A real threat of disruption of the Millennium Development Goals has emerged. We must do our utmost to prevent such a development. Donor assistance to countries in need cannot be postponed until some other time. The tasks set out as a priority by the international community must absolutely be addressed. The arrangements adopted at the G-20 summits and the United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development must be implemented — and they must be implemented within the deadlines that we ourselves set.

The second major task in this context is to address the issues of global energy security. Three years ago at the Saint Petersburg G-8 summit in Russia, the principles for a new legal framework for such cooperation were formulated. The goal is to harmonize the interests of all participants in the energy chain: suppliers, consumers and intermediaries or transmitters. It was not so long ago that we solidified these principles, and we invite all States to engage in discussion on them. We believe that such discussions should be conducted with the active involvement of specialized multilateral institutions, including, of course, the agencies of the United Nations family.

The third task that Russia deems to be potentially critical is the comprehensive strengthening of the United Nations itself. The United Nations must adapt itself in a rational way to the new global realities. It should strengthen its influence while preserving its multinational nature and the integrity of the Charter's key provisions. The most important component of the revitalization of the United Nations is reform of the Security Council. The time has come to speed up the search for a compromise formula for the Security Council's expansion, and of course to increase its efficiency.

The third issue I want to touch on is disarmament. The process of multilateral disarmament under United Nations auspices is an extremely important task. There are grounds for hope since, as members are aware, a number of positive trends have emerged in overcoming the protracted crisis. The

Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has adopted its programme of work. I should also like to mention the Russian-Chinese initiative to develop a treaty to prevent the deployment of weapons in outer space, as well as our current proposal to universalize the Russian-American Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles.

Russia will unswervingly follow the path of verifiable and irreversible reductions in nuclear weapons as an essential element of a new start in our relations with the United States. In Moscow in July this year, President Obama and I not only signed a relevant document, but also agreed on a mandate for further negotiations to elaborate a new, legally binding treaty. This treaty should replace the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, which expires in December.

Of special importance here is the relationship between strategic offensive and defensive arms. In my meeting with President Obama this morning, we discussed the recently announced adjustments to the United States' planned development of a missile defence system. I should like to state in this highest of forums that we view this decision as a constructive step in the right direction, which has deservedly received numerous expressions of support from the international community. Russia is ready to engage in detailed discussions with the American side and to undertake relevant initiatives in this field in order to reach mutually acceptable agreement.

Without resolving such problems as missile defence and non-nuclear strategic offensive arms, it will be simply impossible to achieve real progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. I believe that the work on this new treaty will be fully consistent with relevant provisions of the joint document endorsed by the President of the United States and myself at our meeting in Moscow.

We believe that other nuclear States should join the disarmament efforts of Russia and the United States. There is no need to wait for further progress in the Russian-American disarmament process. We can begin forthwith to elaborate acceptable and practical arrangements that take into account the differences in the size of potentials. In that respect, we could draw on international experience in the twentieth century, for example the 1921-1922 Washington Conference on naval armaments, where participants agreed on the

maximum size of their fleets without insisting on parity in absolute terms. If we take the same approach today, based on the current status of nuclear arsenals, we could send the rest of the world a sure signal that the unaccounted numbers will be added to the equation of strategic stability.

Pursuing nuclear disarmament, strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy will be at the very heart of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We cherish the hope that it will be successful.

The global nuclear security summit scheduled for April 2010 will provide a good opportunity for a more detailed discussion of these issues. We support that initiative. We have also agreed with the United States Administration on joint steps for further progress on such aspects of nuclear security as the prevention of nuclear terrorism, expanding access to the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy to all signatories implementing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in good faith, and other decisions. We call for collective cooperation on these matters.

In order to reach a common understanding on such important issues, we must engage all nations and influential international organizations in the aforementioned negotiation processes. The international community, it must be said, has at its disposal such tried and tested measures for enhancing regional and international security as nuclear-weapon-free zones. In particular, there is a very pressing need to establish a zone in the Middle East free of all types of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. This is a long-standing issue, with respect to which a resolution was adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference.

Russia, as a member of the Quartet of international mediators on the Middle East settlement, has consistently supported efforts to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime in the Middle East. Russia has made specific proposals within the framework of the NPT review process to seek mutually acceptable ways of implementing earlier decisions on this matter. All countries of the region need to take an active stance on this issue and demonstrate their willingness to achieve that end.

We also need to accelerate work towards a mechanism to ensure peace and security in North-East Asia. Russia has made proposals in this regard to the

participants in the Six-Party Talks. In the present circumstances, this task is more urgent than ever.

The fourth topic I wish to address is that of regional conflicts and regional security. We intend to continue to participate in the search for effective options for settling regional conflicts. We are convinced that the use of force can only exacerbate such situations. That was demonstrated by the reckless attempt by the Georgian authorities last year to resolve the problems in their relations with South Ossetia by military means.

At that time, in August 2008, we came very close to a situation in which a local armed conflict had the potential to grow into a full-scale war. I am certain that this is clearly understood by everyone in this Hall today. In order to ensure that this should never recur, we need clear and effective mechanisms to implement the principle of the indivisibility of security. Without such a mechanism, we will not be able to move beyond the legacy of the past or overcome existing prejudices. I wish to stress that irresponsible regimes should not have any opportunity whatsoever to foment disputes among other countries.

The role and place of the modern nation in ensuring global security is a topic of the greatest relevance today. We have witnessed situations time and again in which problems emerging within the confines of an individual State have acquired a regional or even global character. The incompetence and, very often, ineffectiveness of national Government institutions can have consequences that are fraught with risks for several countries. The prevention of such an outcome is of course a very complex and sensitive issue, but one upon which we must deliberate together.

These issues were the focus of discussions at a recent conference held in Russia. The outcome was quite clear. What we require in the future is a smart foreign policy. The current global crisis is not limited to economics; it is also a crisis of ideas. It is the accumulation of a critical mass of outdated policies and development models.

Having developed the initiative to sign a new European security treaty, Russia has proposed taking a fresh approach to this problem and, above all, abandoning outdated policies. We all hope that the cold war has been left behind, but the world has not become more secure. What we need today are modern solutions and clear legal frameworks for implementing existing

political commitments. We do not need declarations, appeals or demagogues; what we need are clear legal frameworks, including to enshrine the principle under international law that one must not seek to ensure one's own security at the expense of the security of others.

Our initiative concerns the Euro-Atlantic space. However, its key provision on the indivisibility of security is a universal principle that is applicable to all regions of the world and is fully consistent with the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter. The principle of the indivisibility of security should be an integral part of current international law.

Values are the last issue that I wish to mention from this rostrum. The protection of human rights and interests and the universal application of commonly recognized norms and principles in that area should be the basis for strengthening trust and stability in international relations. We are all united by values that are rooted in morality, religion, customs and traditions. I am talking about such fundamental concepts as the right to life, tolerance of dissent, responsibility towards one's family, charity and compassion, which are the foundation both of daily life and of relations among States.

However, unfortunately, it is the reality that the world is witnessing growing nationalism and numerous manifestations of religious intolerance and hatred. That is why we believe that establishing a high-level group on interfaith dialogue under the Director-General of UNESCO is extremely valuable. It is particularly relevant on the eve of 2010, which the United Nations has declared International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures.

To conclude, I cannot fail to mention, as I stand here, another topic that is very close to the heart of all citizens of our country and all peoples of the world. Next year, we are going to celebrate the sixty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Russia put forward a proposal to adopt a relevant General Assembly resolution and to hold a special session to commemorate all victims of that war in May next year. We cannot allow its horrible lessons to be forgotten.

However, from time to time we see neo-fascist organizations raise their heads. Racial, national and ethnic crimes are being committed. Attempts are being made to whitewash Nazism, to deny the Holocaust and to review the decisions of the Nuremberg Tribunal. I

am convinced that strong and joint resistance to manifestations of neo-Nazism and to attempts to revise the results of the Second World War enshrined in the United Nations Charter should remain a priority task of the Organization.

The creation of the United Nations was one of the principal achievements of the international community in the twentieth century. This Organization and its fruitful activities have become a symbol of the twentieth century, and there is simply no alternative to these activities. We have no right to forget that the United Nations possesses unique international legitimacy, and we all must preserve and strengthen this shared wealth of the peoples of the world.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Russian Federation for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Dmitry Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of South Africa.

Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Zuma: This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption, in 1989, of General Assembly resolution 44/27 A, on international solidarity with the liberation struggle in South Africa. That was one of numerous Assembly resolutions in which the nations of the world pledged their support for the eradication of apartheid.

Within months of the adoption of that important resolution, the ban on South African liberation movements was lifted. Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners were released. The stage was thus

set for the negotiations that would eventually lead to the achievement of freedom and democracy in our country.

The role of the United Nations in the struggle to end apartheid is an exceptional example of the collective political will of the international community. It represented the victory of unity over division and of negotiation over confrontation. It represented a clear commitment to the promotion of basic human rights. As South Africans, we will always be grateful for that international solidarity.

Since the advent of democracy in 1994, we have built a solid, stable democracy, founded on the principles of unity, non-sexism, non-racialism and democracy. As we continue to build our young nation, we are cognizant of the need for a conducive international environment. For that reason, we are committed to playing our part, with the rest of the international community, in taking forward the fight against poverty and in responding to the crises that are confronting the world today. We must act now, together, to halt the degradation of the environment. We must act now, together, to prevent the global economic crisis from undoing the gains that we have achieved over decades.

The eradication of poverty must remain central to the work of the United Nations. The Organization must continue to work harder to unite the world to work to alleviate the suffering of the world's poor and marginalized. The global economic meltdown has dealt a heavy blow to world efforts to eradicate poverty. But it should not diminish our resolve.

The United Nations must play a significant role in finding solutions to the global economic crisis. The crisis should not be an excuse to delay further action on the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals. Rather, it should urge us to double our efforts to achieve greater and faster progress. Developing countries did not cause the economic crisis, but they are severely affected by it. The crisis has further highlighted the urgent need for fundamental reform of the Bretton Woods institutions, including their mandate, scope, governance and responsiveness.

These institutions have been unrepresentative since their formation half a century ago. The current arrangements are inadequate and unfair. They do not reflect the changes that have taken place in the global economy. We should ensure that the election of the

heads of all those institutions is more democratic, and opens opportunities to developing countries. The emerging and developing countries, including the poorest, must have a greater voice and greater participation in those institutions. Similarly, if we are to eradicate poverty there is an urgent need to conclude the Doha Round of trade negotiations in a manner that prioritizes development.

We continue to work for an African renewal, and welcome the ongoing support of the United Nations system in addressing the challenges facing the continent. Now more than ever, it is necessary for the United Nations to ensure that the international community collectively implements the commitments made to Africa. We have a viable socio-economic development blueprint, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which should be used in mobilizing resources for Africa. We appreciate that there can be no lasting peace without development, and no development without security.

Over the past 20 years, Africa has made much progress in working to end conflicts and to promote democratic practices and institutions. However, some pockets of conflict persist. For its part, South Africa has been engaged in mediation, conflict prevention and peacekeeping on the continent, in, among other places, Burundi, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The African Union has the political will to resolve conflicts on the continent. However, it lacks resources to run effective peacekeeping interventions and conflict prevention mechanisms. We appeal for support for African peacemaking efforts, and for greater cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. In this regard, we call on the General Assembly to align itself with resolutions of the African Union and the Southern African Development Community that do not recognize Governments that come into power by force or other unconstitutional means.

The search for global peace, stability and security cannot be separated from the pursuit of justice, self-determination, human rights and economic development. We need to constantly reaffirm the inalienable human rights of all people. We call for the full and effective implementation of the outcomes of the World Conference against Racism and the subsequent Durban Review Conference. It is of

concern that at the close of the first decade of the twenty-first century there are still nations that find their lands occupied and their peoples oppressed.

We are convinced that urgent and concrete steps are needed to resolve the situation in Western Sahara.

We must work with similar urgency towards the achievement, through negotiations, of peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians. This must be based on the creation of a viable Palestinian State, existing side by side with Israel, within the 1967 borders, which must be secure and internationally recognized.

We also call for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba.

We also appreciate the recent pronouncements by some nuclear-weapon States on their intention to reduce their nuclear arsenals.

Let us take up this new momentum and utilize the opportunity of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to recommit ourselves to the full implementation of obligations under the NPT. We should ensure a balance among the objectives of disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

For Africa, the impact of climate change is devastating and will severely undermine development and poverty eradication efforts. We need to act now to ensure that there is an inclusive, fair and effective global agreement on this critical challenge. The agreement must recognize that solving the climate problem cannot be separated from the struggle to eradicate poverty. Developed countries bear the greatest responsibility for climate change and its impact. We must therefore strike a balance between adaptation and mitigation. Our goal should be to significantly reduce emissions across the globe without constraining development in the countries of the South.

Ms. McClean (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Developed countries must make ambitious, quantified and legally binding emission reduction commitments that are in line with science and that address their historical responsibilities. At Copenhagen, there needs to be agreement on new, additional, sustainable and predictable financing for adaptation.

This should be for programmes that reduce the vulnerability of developing countries to the effects of climate change.

In a world that is increasingly interconnected and interdependent, international problems can be resolved effectively only through multilateral cooperation. The United Nations must continue to be at the centre of multilateralism, but it needs to be reformed if it is to carry out its mandate effectively, efficiently and transparently.

We remain committed to the view that no reform of the United Nations can be complete without the fundamental reform of the Security Council. It must be representative of the international community and reflect the geopolitical realities of today. If the Security Council is not reformed and does not have permanent representation for Africa, the legitimacy of the Council's decisions will continue to be questioned. South Africa continues to advocate an expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership.

Let me express our appreciation to the world for the celebration of the inaugural Nelson Mandela Day on 18 July this year. Scores of people engaged in a minimum of 67 minutes of voluntary action in the service of humanity, in honour of our icon, President Mandela. The Non-Aligned Movement has joined the call for this General Assembly to declare 18 July Nelson Mandela Day. This would be in recognition of President Mandela's contribution to the struggle for democracy and the cause of humanity, and to promote community service across the globe. In this regard, we hope that the General Assembly will adopt a consensus resolution in support of Nelson Mandela Day.

South Africa is privileged to host the 2010 Fédération Internationale de Football Association World Cup in the middle of next year, which will be the first time that the tournament has been held on African soil. We look forward to hosting the peoples of the world, who will enjoy unique African hospitality and vibrancy.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing President of the General Assembly for his leadership at the sixty-third session of the Assembly. I thank the General Assembly and representatives for the opportunity to address this esteemed gathering. Working together as a global family, we can do more to create a better and just world.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of South Africa for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Václav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Czech Republic.

Mr. Václav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Václav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Klaus: My country, the Czech Republic, has always appreciated the role that the United Nations has played in strengthening security, stability and prosperity in the world. I want to assure Members that we will continue to participate in the activities of the United Nations. We firmly believe in the importance of this Organization and want it to be efficient and effective. For that reason, we support the reform of the Security Council so that it will more adequately reflect the political and economic realities of the world today, as some speakers have stressed here today. Changes are necessary and we are ready to start discussing them very seriously.

This year, in our part of the world, we commemorate 20 years since the fall of communism, since the moment when my country — together with other States of Central and Eastern Europe — regained freedom and sovereignty, and was again able to resume the place in the community of free and democratic countries that it enjoyed when the United Nations was founded in 1945.

In the 20 years that have passed since those historic events, we succeeded in building a stable political democracy and in transforming our economic system into a functioning free-market economy. I am mentioning this because I believe that our experience is

relevant to the ongoing discussions about how to solve the economic problems that the world faces today.

We are meeting at a time when the world is in the midst one of the deepest economic crises since the Second World War. The financial crisis, which originated in the United States two years ago, quickly spilled over into most other countries and led to a severe decline in economic activity all over the world, a substantial decrease in international trade and capital flows and an increase in social and economic instability in a large number of countries on all continents.

The United Nations — as a unique worldwide Organization — and its specialized institutions have become an important global platform for discussing alternative steps and policies that could, one hopes, help to overcome the crisis and diminish its impact. The measures that have been implemented to date have contributed to the fact that the world has succeeded in avoiding a repetition of the situation in the 1930s. We also succeeded in avoiding a repetition of a massive protectionist reaction to the crisis. Protectionism in all its forms should be resolutely condemned here today.

We see the first signs that the economic crisis has reached bottom, or come close to it. Nevertheless, we find ourselves at the beginning of a difficult and very complicated post-crisis period. There are many reasons for the fragility and vulnerability of this phase, but I should like to refer to just a few.

First, attempts to increase aggregate demand led to unprecedented expansion in public expenditure and public debt. As a result, a large number of United Nations Member States are facing or approaching a debt trap. Those huge fiscal deficits will harm future economic growth. Secondly, international flows of private capital, which contributed so substantially to rapid economic growth in recent decades, are decreasing and becoming less reliable. Thirdly, a decrease in international trade will undermine the continuation of export-oriented strategies of many emerging markets.

It would be a tragic mistake to fundamentally impair economic freedom in favour of State or supra-State regulation just now. Long-term experience shows us that it is thanks to free markets and free entrepreneurship that we enjoy the current material well-being and economic progress. Business cycles, accompanied by economic downturns, recessions and

crises, did exist, do exist and will exist in the future. In spite of them, the world has been — at least in the past two centuries — characterized primarily by economic growth and growing prosperity.

When looking for an appropriate reaction to the problems connected with the current crisis, we should build on the idea that the crisis was basically a failure of Governments, not of markets. The manipulation of monetary policy in an attempt to artificially prolong the period of growth, the irrational subsidization of demand in the housing sector and the failures in financial-market regulation contributed substantially to the crisis. Let us not delude ourselves into believing that economic cycles and their consequences can be prevented by more extensive Government regulation or by aiming at global governance of the world economy.

This issue has its important territorial and geographic aspects as well. We have to pay attention to the needs and interests of all kinds of countries — rich and poor, developed and developing. Global economic development will benefit from the removal of barriers, not from creating new ones, because barriers would substantially complicate poorer countries' access to foreign markets, as well as their ability to develop by their own means.

Economic recession and large increases in public debt have reduced the possibilities available to today's world to meet such goals as combating climate change. I do not intend to go into details of this issue here now, but we should carefully follow it because of unfinished scientific debate and pay attention to the costs and benefits of our future decisions.

I do, however, want to emphasize that the measures proposed to combat climate change represent another heavy burden for both developed countries, which are falling into deep fiscal deficits now, and for developing countries. This is happening in a context in which rich countries, often pushing this agenda at international forums, are losing their ability to compensate poorer countries for the impact of those additional costs.

The Czech Republic, as a successor State to Czechoslovakia, which was one of the founding Members of the United Nations, has always participated actively in all kinds of United Nations activities. It intends to do so in the future as well. It is in our interest that the Organization remains a respected high-level forum that contributes to

prosperity, stability and peaceful solutions to the conflicts of today's world.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Czech Republic for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Václav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena, President of the Republic of El Salvador

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of El Salvador.

Mr. Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena, President of the Republic of El Salvador, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena, President of the Republic of El Salvador, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Funes Cartagena (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first of all like to thank Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann of the sister Republic of Nicaragua for his work during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly. I would also like to convey our congratulations to Mr. Ali Treki on his election as President of the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, as well as to wish him every success in his efforts. We would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his leadership of the United Nations.

A little more than three months ago, by changing its Government after two decades under the same political party, El Salvador began a process to expand and strengthen its democracy. The new Government has set just a few, but overarching, goals aimed at beginning a process of change that pulls the country out of its economic crisis and its social and cultural backwardness while establishing the foundation for the full development of its productive potential, including social integration and fair distribution of its income, as well as making it possible to achieve peace and security, which is our greatest challenge. We have set out the major outlines of my Administration in three words: unite, grow and include.

First of all, the Government over which I preside is not based on a single political party, let alone on a single faction. It is a Government of national unity focused on two main goals. The first is to put an end to the confrontations, hatred and divisions that have drained a significant amount of vigour from our society and fuelled a bloody civil war that has left behind painful scars. The second is to put in place the foundation for peaceful and secure coexistence.

That means that major national decisions will no longer be taken behind closed doors or out of sight of the majority of our people. Every measure, every step in El Salvador will be discussed and decided at the table through dialogue. Seated at that table will be representatives of the production and labour sectors, as well as of social movements, non-governmental organizations, political parties, churches and academia. It is untrue that the demands of administration require curtailing dialogue as the basic instrument of the decision-making process.

We were able to set up our economic and social council in barely 100 days. That body is charged with proposing and considering social and economic policies that will allow us to successfully address the crisis we are experiencing. In the same period, we were also able to launch an ambitious low-income housing programme that is unprecedented in El Salvador's history. That programme, which was the result of Government working with the private sector, will produce 100,000 jobs. Work has already begun in the first projects.

That undertaking, like others in the area of social and productive infrastructure, also helps to promote temporary work for young people at risk and to improve the housing and community conditions in the poorest areas. It is also part of the comprehensive anti-crisis plan that I promised during my campaign, which we are carrying out through enormous effort.

Also in less than 100 days, we succeeded in expanding the social safety net and the provision of assistance for the poorest families in 100 rural municipalities. Upon my return to the country, we will launch the first safety net, involving social and employment services in urban communities experiencing extreme poverty. We are responding promptly to the urgent needs of the most excluded, impoverished and neglected groups in our society. I should like to reiterate that all this is being done

through an honest and wide-scale dialogue that includes the entire social spectrum of El Salvador.

We have resolutely addressed the concerns resulting from changes in power. It was once believed that changes in Government would lead to instability and uncertainty. The complete opposite happened. We have given legal guarantees and clear examples that the new Government is serious, responsible in managing finances and trustworthy when it comes to both domestic and foreign affairs, including as regards multilateral organizations and friendly countries extending assistance to El Salvador.

In that connection, allow me to thank the countries and groups for that assistance. Their generosity makes us even more determined to follow the path of responsibility, austerity and anti-corruption efforts throughout society and Government.

My country has open wounds that have an impact on our daily lives, including on our family, social and cultural lives. Those wounds include public safety and immigration, which has taken about 3 million of our fellow citizens abroad in search of the work and opportunities they have not found in our homeland.

I should first like to speak briefly about insecurity.

As the Assembly is aware, this is not an exclusively Salvadoran phenomenon. While it is a global problem, it is certainly more pronounced in our region. Organized crime, drug trafficking and the activities of violent criminal youth gangs have developed in the past decade to become the worst threat to the stability of our countries. The policies that have been implemented jointly and within individual countries have not merely fallen short; they have been but a succession of failures. That means that we must increase our joint efforts while using all the means and intelligence at our disposal to confront those scourges. We are faced with a structural phenomenon that hampers the full normal functioning of our societies.

In that regard, I am completely convinced that we must have strong, long-term, decisive and intelligent policies within our countries. However, we will fully defeat crime only if we unite as a single entity that is genuinely determined to defeat organized crime, which is a destructive element that undermines institutions and saps the creative and productive energies of our peoples.

I have said to my fellow citizens, and I should like to reiterate here, that my Government will do everything the law allows to combat crime with determination and courage. However, this is not a task for a single president or Government; it is also one for society as a whole. I have therefore called for the widest possible level of participation from all groups and people of good will in carrying out what is called “the good fight”, referred to by the Apostle Paul in his first letter to Timothy — a good fight against insecurity, fear and hopelessness. That is the great challenge that brings us together, let us make no mistake.

I should like to propose the holding of an international conference to address these problems in order to consider best practices with which to confront that battle together. To that end, we would require the logistical and financial support of both the Organization of American States and the United Nations.

The other wound to which I referred is the ongoing waves of immigration by Salvadoran men and women that have been taking place for many years. All those who have left have been in their productive years, the most skilled, seeking the work, security and well-being denied them in their own country. With 3 million Salvadorans abroad, remittances equal about 18 per cent of our gross national product. That tearing apart of families is difficult to overcome. It is also a constant reminder of the fact that we have not been able to put in place the necessary conditions to keep our children home, as well as of the fact that we will never be able to achieve our potential, individually or as a society, unless we heal this terrible wound.

I have personally raised the flag of our country’s full democratization, which means that emigrants should have access to the vote that has been denied them to this day. That unjustifiable denial is added to the pain of separation and the loss of human rights to which they are subjected as immigrants.

I have called on political parties, intellectuals, academics and judges to draft the outlines of a national political accord that advances the necessary reforms to expand and strengthen democracy, increase transparency in the workings of political parties, improve the administration of national elections law and — as a key element of my appeal — ensure the right to vote for our brothers and sisters abroad.

We are concerned, moreover, not only by the unstable situation of migrants living abroad with no legal status, suffering constant uncertainty and fear of being deported, but also by the difficult situation they are currently experiencing as a result of the global financial and economic crisis. For this reason a policy for the inclusion and protection of the rights of our migrant population and their families is a priority for us. We will be undertaking measures within and with countries of transit and destination countries to guarantee migrants’ rights everywhere in the world, and in particular the rights of our Salvadorian brothers. We will emphasize an integrated and long-term approach to addressing migration, considering all its causes, manifestations and effects. We will bring this vision to the process initiated at the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, and we pledge our participation at the third Global Forum on Migration and Development, to take place in Athens.

My Government is carrying out a foreign policy geared towards strengthening and broadening relationships of friendship and cooperation with all countries of the world, both at the bilateral and multilateral levels, based on solidarity, mutual respect and compliance with the principles of peaceful coexistence, such as respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, the non-use or threat of use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for the right to self-determination and respect for international law and international commitments, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter.

The foreign policy of El Salvador is free from ideological or partisan political stances. In good faith it is guided not only by national interests and priorities but also by the common goals and interests of the international community, in particular the quest for and promotion of peace, political dialogue, cooperation in solidarity, security and sustainable development. One example of this is the restoration of diplomatic relations between El Salvador and Cuba, which overcame a lingering breach in our country’s hemispheric relations. I also wish to underscore that a further key objective of my Government is to strengthen the ties that we have with our brother countries in Central America.

In this context, I am certain that there will be no solution or future for any of our countries if we act in

isolation from each other. We long ago emerged from the era of nationalities, and we are now ready to embark on a new phase, one of greater integration. In this regard the European Union is perhaps the most advanced example.

I appeal to my Central American colleagues to consider this point. There are many pending issues that we must address. There are common challenges that we must face shoulder to shoulder. We have everything to gain and nothing to lose in the full integration of our region. In these years of the bicentenary we must regain the free and independent spirit of our ancestors, which was exemplified in the concept of a Central American union as a basis for development, well-being and peace for our peoples. A first step would be to convene a summit that would focus on a balanced integration process and an analysis of greater transfer of competencies to strengthen the mechanisms of supra-nationality, in order to further the aims and principles established in the Tegucigalpa Protocol, to ensure its credibility and viability.

Among the aims, of course, would be to strengthen regional democratic institutions, helping us to avoid occurrences such as the Honduran coup d'état, of which members are all well aware. Working together we must ensure that it will be impossible to return to the times of authoritarianism or military or civilian-military dictatorships. The coup d'état in Honduras must not be allowed to set a precedent which will jeopardize the achievements that we have reached in terms of regional stability and democratic institutions. The de facto Government in our brother country has ignored the clamour of voices raised by the international community, calling for Honduras to return as quickly as possible to constitutional order through dialogue and political negotiation in accordance with human rights and the fundamental freedoms of the Honduran people.

Until the Constitution is restored in Honduras through the immediate reinstatement of President Zelaya and the creation of a government of national unity in keeping with the San José Agreement, the electoral process currently being prepared in our brother country will lack the legitimacy or transparency necessary to guarantee reliable results which might help resolve the crisis in our brother country.

The United Nations has played and will play a leading role in the maintenance of international peace and security and in the promotion of democracy and development. El Salvador is a leading example: the Organization helped in reaching the Peace Agreements that succeeded in resolving our internal conflict — a contribution for which I am deeply grateful, because it led us from war to peace and from peace to a phase of transition to democratization and development. In this regard we will engage in a major review of the international agenda in order to set priorities and to ensure compliance with the key guidelines issued by this global Organization and which benefit the well-being and dignity of our peoples. We are implementing policies that are geared towards meeting the commitments we have entered into at major international conferences, in particular the Millennium Development Goals and the promotion and full protection of human rights. We will also be joining international agreements aimed at strengthening human rights and freedoms.

We believe in the role that the United Nations has played in the field of cooperation and development, and we reiterate our support for the reform of its principal organs, programmes and subsidiary bodies, which will allow the Organization to adapt to the demands and complexities of new challenges, in particular through the interrelationship and interaction that exist among political, economic, social, environmental and security phenomena.

Thus we commit ourselves to strengthening our national system for the protection of human rights and to promoting and guaranteeing a policy of justice, truth and compensation for serious infringements of human rights, by implementing a policy of openness, honesty and transparency in public affairs.

The effects of the international crisis that broke out last year have been felt by all, but especially by poor and developing countries whose economies are dependent on large markets and that suffer from the consequences of the decline of economic activity, employment and consumption. Given this situation, international solidarity and cooperation take on extreme importance for developing countries, which have limited natural and financial resources and are very vulnerable. In this regard we call upon the industrialized countries and on the donor community to join every international effort and initiative to overcome the current challenges, which jeopardize

achievements made to date and future progress for humankind.

We recommend taking full advantage of the experience and expertise within the United Nations system in fostering international cooperation and coordinating efforts to achieve common goals. In this context we appeal particularly to developed countries to ensure follow-up, support for and implementation of the recommendations and commitments set out in the Monterrey Consensus and the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus that took place in Doha in 2008, as well as the recommendations contained in the Outcome of the Conference on the World Economic and Financial Crisis and Its Impact on Development (resolution 63/303, annex), in particular the need for donors to maintain and fulfil their commitments and objectives with regard to official development assistance. To that end, there is a need for political resolve to reform the international financial structure and system in order to address the current difficulties.

The high-level meeting on climate change convened by the Secretary-General provided us with an opportunity to consider that issue, especially with respect to compliance by States, and in particular the industrialized countries, with the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which was adopted shortly before the Earth Summit, and with later commitments to eliminate the danger posed by environmental degradation and ongoing activities that have exacerbated climate change. We therefore hope that we will act in earnest, responsibly and decisively at the Copenhagen conference to achieve a new agreement in this area so as to ensure that States do not put their own interests before the common well-being of humankind. It is time to adopt measures and mechanisms to rectify the mistakes and shortcomings of the past, and to launch a process to bring development into harmony with environmental protections.

As participants here are aware, in my country we have done away with ideological prejudices and stereotypes in our international relations. We believe in multilateralism and in particular in the systems of our continental organization, the Organization of American States, and of the United Nations. We believe in the rich and valuable contribution that new and emerging nations can make to the work of those two systems. We

believe that the future of humankind largely depends on the intelligence, honour and generosity of the larger nations in ensuring the full and fair development of emerging countries so as to put an end to the discrimination and differences that offend human nature.

I thank the General Assembly for its attention and its support for my country and the Salvadoran people.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of El Salvador for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Carlos Mauricio Funes Cartagena, President of the Republic of El Salvador, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

Mr. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, Minister of African Union Affairs of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on his unanimous election as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. We are convinced that, guided by his Government's adherence to the principles of national independence and sovereignty, the primacy of the values of the human individual, the maintenance of international peace and security, and the economic development of all countries, and with his well-known diplomatic skills, he will contribute to the good management of the Assembly and to ensuring that the United Nations achieves the universal objectives of peace, stability and global development.

We also express our thanks to Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nicaragua, for his outstanding work at

the sixty-third session, at a time when the world was shaken by an acute financial and economic crisis the consequences of which have fomented instability and threatened peace in various regions of the world.

Mr. Singh Puri (India), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Amid this climate of insecurity, the food and global energy crises, natural disasters and climate change that threaten the sustainability of the global ecology, the work of the Secretary-General, as the coordinator of the activities of our Organization, has been far from easy. We therefore commend Mr. Ban Ki-moon for his efforts to address those issues and offer him our full support and cooperation so that his actions can be implemented without delay.

In taking the floor to address this international forum, I wish first and foremost to express our gratitude for this renewed opportunity to share our thoughts, experience and common concerns for the modern world. It is timely indeed that the Secretary-General has dedicated the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly to the topic of effective responses to the current global economic and financial crisis in order to analyse its causes and adopt policies and strategies that will enable States to mitigate the negative consequences of the crisis, which are having an increasingly debilitating impact on economically weak countries in particular.

Following the end of the cold war and the disappearance of the bipolar and antagonistic world that emerged from the Second World War, it became clear that a more globalized, united and integrated era had dawned among nations that would result in greater justice, solidarity and integration in international exchanges and relations. Mutual respect for cultural specificities remains the fundamental basis for international cooperation, an association of shared responsibilities, mutual respect and equitable mutual benefit. That has been the guiding ideal of the United Nations since its inception. Its efforts to create a world of peace, development and well-being for humankind have followed this aim for the sixty-plus years of its history.

Yet the gap between developed and developing countries has only widened, in spite of the numerous resolutions, decisions and recommendations that have been adopted to promote the equality of political, economic, social and cultural rights; the global

development of humanity; the replacement of the old economic order with a new, more just and equitable system; the provision of financial assistance to the most vulnerable countries; the liberalization of global trade; and in spite of the many other measures adopted at special summits.

Yet, despite all this, global achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals has fallen short by 20 per cent. We can see that, unfortunately, egoism and the desire to dominate remain the driving force in international relations. Inevitably, without a multilateralism that respects the criterion of partnership based on mutual respect for shared responsibilities and reciprocal and equitable interests, the global political, economic and social balance is undermined. Inevitably, unless this partnership is based on respect for the cultural values of every nation, a new cold or hot war is bound to break out between poor countries and rich countries.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea welcomes the timeliness of this debate, since in the middle of this unprecedented global crisis we can all redefine our positions on the subject of global development. Here, in New York in 2009, we must resolve these problems so that the current causes of a misery and conflictiveness driven by the wealthy countries to the detriment of the poor or economically fragile countries no longer justify this new and absurd bipolarization — when, despite everything, humankind has assimilated the supremacy of the values that make up the human individual.

What kind of morality is it when some States enjoy economic abundance, while others suffer in misery, marginalization and desolation?

Accordingly, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea calls for new global approaches that will enhance the capacity of developing countries to contribute politically and economically and will allow a coexistence that safeguards the political and economic interests of all countries.

We can no longer continue on the path that we are on. We can no longer continue on this irrational and irresponsible path. We must consider matters calmly in order to adopt positive attitudes that effectively support the original philosophy of the United Nations, a philosophy that conceived of a united world where human beings, regardless of race, culture or level of

civilization, are recognized as human beings, in both the North and the South.

Thus, there can be no justification for theories of globalization of policies unless they respect the cultural plurality that characterizes the peoples of the world. There can be no discrimination or exclusion. Intercultural dialogue must strengthen this community of nations with a view to achieving a coexistence that is conducive to learning from one another for the mutual benefit of us all.

Equatorial Guinea conceives of its development as the outcome of coordinated action between national effort and international cooperation. We rule out discrimination of any kind for reasons of political, economic or cultural system in the case of any country or international organization, provided that the latter respects our country's independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity, the peace and free exercise of the sovereignty of the people, the right to the free utilization of our natural resources, the maintenance of friendly relations and cooperation for reciprocal benefit, and respect for the cultural values of the people.

Through its application of these principles, Equatorial Guinea enjoys excellent ties of friendship, cooperation and good neighbourliness with all countries in Central Africa. We accept economic cooperation with countries of all ideological beliefs, from the East to the West and from the North to the South. This is part of our contribution to global peace and balance.

As a result, our oil and other resources contribute not only to the development of our European partners, but also to that of Africa, America and Asia. This being said, we are constantly amazed by the conflictiveness, suspicion and envy that these oil resources arouse in a number of countries, these same resources that we have made freely available to the international community. We witnessed this first-hand when Equatorial Guinea was the victim of mercenary-led invasions, terrorist attacks and plans for political destabilization, whose clear aim was to gain illegal access to resources which belong solely to the people of Equatorial Guinea.

We wish to emphasize that Equatorial Guinea is a peaceful country without ambitions to acquire territory or engage in political hegemony and without policies designed to jeopardize peace or stability in other States and nations. We reaffirm our commitment to the

principles of the United Nations Charter and the Charter of the African Union with regard to the maintenance of peaceful relations, the rejection of violence and the peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue, mediation and, where necessary, recourse to international tribunals.

Global peace is the universal right of all and an indispensable prerequisite for the survival of humankind. It is non-negotiable, not to be traded with any public or private interest, and is so fragile that it can be shattered when injustices affecting a State or a community of States are committed. Therefore, we are addressing the situation caused by the global economic crisis, which, without a doubt, has had repercussions in individual States of the international community, each at different levels and each with the potential to affect global peace. We have witnessed examples of such consequences in the recent conflicts that have engulfed various States in the world today. Yet, this noble world Organization was created for peace.

It is for the sake of maintaining peace and world stability that we all meet here every year. It is also for the sake of peace and stability that we must be careful not to let the attitudes of some countries or groups of countries foster, out of whatever ambitions or selfishness they have, continuing injustices that have created the crisis in international relations.

With best wishes for a world abundant in peace and happiness, I wish every success to this sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Leonel Fernández Reyna, President of the Dominican Republic

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Leonel Fernández Reyna, President of the Dominican Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Leonel Fernández Reyna, President of the Dominican Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Fernández Reyna (*spoke in Spanish*): We convey our warmest congratulations to the renowned Libyan diplomat Mr. Ali Treki on his recent election to preside over the General Assembly at this sixty-fourth session, as well as for his call for a dialogue among civilizations, for interreligious understanding, for the promotion for peace and security and for closing the divide between rich and poor.

Exactly one year ago, when we were taking stock of progress made towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals at the midterm point, something unexpected occurred: the collapse of some of the most emblematic investment banks, and with that the worsening of the global financial crisis.

Before this crisis occurred, however, the world, in particular the developing countries, was already affected by the impact of two other crises that had begun simultaneously: the crisis involving oil prices and that involving food prices.

As a result of the first of these crises, that is, the oil crisis, vigorous and intense social protest broke out in various parts of the world. Suddenly, all products became more expensive. Governments were forced to use their currency reserves to pay their oil bills and were forced to allocate subsidies for the sake of maintaining civic peace and democratic governance.

When it comes to the second crisis, the food crisis, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations established that as a result of the food crisis, the number of people suffering from hunger worldwide rose by 150 million, which meant that for the first time in human history the total figure exceeded the number of 1 billion human beings.

Before these two crises broke out, the World Bank had already indicated that in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals in the remaining seven years — that is, between 2008 and 2015 — \$250 billion were still needed, or \$50 billion every year. Obviously, with the outbreak of these crises, which gravely affected the economies of developing countries, the resources needed to meet the objectives

that had been set to cut by half the level of poverty worldwide would have to be increased significantly above the projected figures established by the World Bank.

As one can see, the situation last year was already bleak at the time of submitting for analysis and evaluation the achievements that had been made and future challenges to meet in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. In spite of the dark clouds that were gathering on the global economic horizon, we still felt optimistic; we held the illusion that we might meet our targets. After all, we had made continuous progress towards meeting some of the Goals. But from then on, we witnessed the deluge of the global financial crisis. Since then, the storm has been so intense that it has created a widespread state of anxiety and fear at a global scale the likes of which has not been seen in many decades.

According to the Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr. Margaret Chan, 400,000 more children and tens of thousands of women will die every year as a direct consequence of the global financial crisis. Today, while the meetings of the General Assembly of the most important global organization are being held, 25,000 children will die in various parts of the world. That is the equivalent of saying that a child will die every three seconds, or 18 children every minute.

By the time I conclude my statement this afternoon — my 15 minute statement — worldwide 270 children will have died, whose early deaths could have been avoided. Throughout the course of this year, 9 million children, which is equivalent to the entire population of my country, the Dominican Republic, will have lost their lives for no reason or justification. This represents a human tragedy of epic proportions, a true catastrophe. It is morally and politically unacceptable. For that reason, it is important to call upon the General Assembly to declare a state of emergency with regard to compliance with the Millennium Development Goals.

When facing the challenges to our efforts to meet the eight goals established in the year 2000 for improving the human dignity and living conditions of millions of people worldwide, it is possible to adopt different attitudes. We might consider that we have failed and that these goals can never be met; that they represent a new utopia and therefore the only path

remaining is to abandon any effort to meet those goals. Clearly that would be a cowardly and irresponsible attitude — the worst possible decision. It would mean leaving all those in need of human solidarity and compassion out in the cold. A second attitude would be to reconsider the goals and then extend the timetable to fulfil them; that would seem logical and reasonable. However, that reasoning encounters one obstacle — the fact that children, the poor and the women of the world cannot wait.

The only real way to ensure fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals by the planned 2015 date, is for the General Assembly to work towards promoting true commitment among nations and governmental and non-governmental institutions to urgently assume their task to achieve economic and social development for all people affected by poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy.

It cannot be argued that the resources available to address this urgent task are insufficient. We have seen in the diligent manner used to address the collapse of the international financial system that — as the saying goes — where there is the will there is a way.

Looking ahead, the first thing to be considered is that with the forecasted end of the global economic recession and the resulting gradual recovery of economic growth, we must ensure that we never again witness such a sudden and abrupt increase in oil and food prices as a result of excessive speculation and the transactions of the futures market. We issue this warning because we have been observing with concern, an increase in milk prices over the past three weeks on the international market that have risen by more than \$1,000 per ton without any valid justification.

We must set aside all individual interests, resistance and obstacles that stand in the way of the reform of the global financial system and the stock markets, in order to establish new mechanisms for regulation and supervision that will guarantee that no crisis such as this one will ever occur again.

Because of the lack of compliance to date by the majority of developed countries with their commitments made during the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development to contribute to the development of the poorest and most vulnerable nations and due to the prevailing situation of the global recession, we draw the attention of the General

Assembly to the possibility of finding new sources of financing for the Millennium Development Goals.

In that regard, we suggest the creation of a working group to carry out professional, high-quality research and submit a report containing recommendations and a plan of action geared towards establishing a fine to benefit development on capital deposited in fiscal havens, offshore banks and international financial centres. Placing financial resources in such fiscal havens means that every year we witness tax evasion in a sum equivalent to \$250 billion — a figure — according to the World Bank — equal to the total sum of external aid necessary to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), some \$7 trillion is currently deposited in tax havens which do not contribute one single cent towards fiscal income. OXFAM has indicated that more than \$50 billion in fiscal income slips through the fingers of developing countries each year as a result of offshore banks and tax havens. The organization Christian Aid has also affirmed bleakly that tax evasion is responsible for the deaths of more than 5 million children between the year 2000 and 2015 — the years we set to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

There are abundant resources in the world and what is happening is that they are unfairly and unequally distributed due, inter alia, to an existing global financial architecture marked by the lack of transparency, secrecy, money-laundering, evasion and fraud. Our only hope of changing the current situation of economic decline and social deterioration and the moral crisis that is shaking up the world lies in adopting brave, wise and timely decisions in this prestigious global forum.

The peoples of the world are waiting for these decisions. They are aware that their right to a dignified, honourable and happy life depends upon that. We cannot let them down. We must act with justice courage, a sense of history and with a vision of the future.

I cannot conclude this statement without touching upon the current prevailing situation in Honduras. The United Nations passed a resolution condemning the coup d'état which took place in this Central American nation in June of this year and called for the return of democratic order. The same attitude was adopted by the

Organization of American States, the European Union, the African Union and by the League of Arab States. Despite the entire world's condemnation of that assault on democracy, the de facto Government of Honduras has remained in power, thereby underscoring the weaknesses of the international community to take action.

President José Manuel Zelaya — the sole legitimate President of Honduras, who was scheduled as the sixth speaker to take the floor in the General Assembly this afternoon — has, in a great display of personal courage and daring, preferred to return to his country. It is now to be hoped that we the representatives of the peoples gathered here at this world forum will be able to act with the same dignity, sense of responsibility and level of commitment when it comes to the supremacy of democracy, freedom and justice.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Dominican Republic for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Leonel Fernández Reyna, President of the Dominican Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Ahmadinejad (*spoke in Farsi; English text provided by the delegation*): I thank Almighty God for granting me the opportunity once again to address this important international forum.

At the outset, I wish to begin by congratulating Mr. Ali Treki on his assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, and to

wish him every success. I would also like to extend my thanks to Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, for his excellent stewardship of the work of the Assembly during his term.

Over the past four years, I have spoken about the main challenges facing our world. I have talked about the underlying causes of those challenges and about the need for world Powers to review their outlook and work out new mechanisms to address the pressing international problems before us. I have also talked about the two conflicting outlooks that prevail in our world. One is based on the predominance of its materialistic interests through spreading inequality and oppression, poverty and deprivation, aggression, occupation and deception and looks to bring the entire world under its control and to impose its will on other nations. That outlook has produced nothing but frustration, disappointment and a dark future for humankind as a whole.

The other outlook is one that espouses a belief in the oneness of the Almighty God, follows the teachings of His messengers, respects human dignity and seeks to build a secure world for all members of the human community in which everybody can equally enjoy the blessings of sustainable peace and spirituality. This is an outlook that respects all human beings, nations and venerable cultures in defiance of all types of discrimination in the world. It is also one that commits itself to an ongoing fight to promote equality for all before the law on the basis of justice and fraternity while laying a solid foundation to guarantee equal access for all human beings in their quest to excel in knowledge and science.

Time and again, I have emphasized the need to make fundamental changes in the current outlook on the world and on humankind, so as to be able to create a brighter tomorrow.

Today, I wish to share with the Assembly a few points about the changes that should take place. First, the continuation of the current circumstances in the world is clearly impossible. The present inequitable and unfavourable conditions run counter to the very nature of humankind and move in a direction that contravenes the truth and the goal behind the creation of the world. It is no longer possible to inject trillions of dollars of unreal wealth into the world economy simply by printing worthless paper assets or by

transferring inflation and social and economic problems to others by creating severe budget deficits.

The engine of unbridled capitalism, with its unfair system of thought, has reached the end of road and is unable to move. The era of capitalist thinking and the imposition of one's thoughts on the international community, which is intended to dominate the world in the name of globalization, as well as the age of setting up empires, is over. It is no longer possible to humiliate nations or to impose double standard on the world community.

It is necessary to delegitimize and reject any approach that holds up the realization of the interests of certain Powers as the only measure of democracy or employs despicable forms of intimidation and deceit in the name of freedom and democratic practices. Approaches by which dictators are portrayed as democrats lack legitimacy and must be totally rejected. Time has come to an end for those who define democracy and freedom and set standards while they themselves are the first to violate those fundamental principles. They can in fact no longer be both judge and executioner or challenge real democratically established Governments.

I would like to say again that the time has passed for a group of people who believe that they alone can define concepts such as democracy and freedom and put forth the criteria for those definitions while simultaneously violating the very principles to which they claim to aspire. The continuation of Governments is based on the rule of the people. The development of nations and increasing freedom worldwide will no longer allow them to continue their hypocrisy and vicious attitudes. For those reasons, most nations, including the people of the United States, are waiting for real and profound change. They have welcomed and will continue to welcome change.

How can it be possible that inhuman policies in Palestine have driven the entire population of the country from their homeland for over 60 years by means of force and coercion, attacking them with all types of weapons, including banned weapons, and denying them their legitimate right of self-defence, and, to the astonishment of the international community, calling the occupiers peacemakers and portraying the victims as terrorists?

How can the crimes of the occupiers against defenceless women and children and the destruction of

their homes, farms, hospitals and schools be supported unconditionally by certain Governments and, at the same time, oppressed men and women be subjected the harshest economic blockade, depriving them of resources to meet their basic needs, including food, water and medicine, and leading to genocide? They are not even allowed to rebuild their homes, destroyed during the 22-day barbaric attacks of the Zionist regime, with winter approaching, while the aggressors and their supporters deceitfully continue their rhetorical defence of human rights in order to put others under pressure.

It is unacceptable for a small minority to dominate the politics, economy and culture of large parts of the world through complex systems, establishing a de facto new form of slavery, and harming the reputation of other nations, even European nations and the United States, to achieve its racist goals.

It is unacceptable that nations several thousand miles from the Middle East send their troops to intervene militarily and to promote war, bloodshed, aggression, terror and fear in our region, the Middle East, while brushing aside the protests of nations in the region concerned about their future and their national security, thereby violating peace and interfering in the affairs of others.

Such standpoints are baffling. We only have to look at the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan. A country cannot remain under military occupation in the name of the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking, when the production of illicit drugs has grown, terrorism has increased and tightened its grip, thousands of innocent people have been killed, injured or displaced, infrastructure has been destroyed and regional security has been seriously jeopardized.

Yet those who have created the current disastrous situation continue to blame others. How can they talk about friendship and solidarity with other nations while they expand their military bases in various parts of the world, including Latin America. That situation cannot continue. It is increasingly impossible to promote expansionist and inhuman policies on the basis of militaristic logic. The logic of coercion and intimidation will have dire consequences and exacerbate current global problems.

It is not acceptable that the military budgets of some Governments far exceed the budgets of entire

countries of the world. Some countries export billions of dollars of arms every year, stockpile chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, establish military bases or have a military presence in other countries while accusing others of militarism, and mobilize all their global resources to impede the scientific and technological progress of other nations under the pretext of countering arms proliferation.

It is not acceptable that the United Nations and the Security Council, whose decisions should represent all nations and Governments through the application of democratic and popular methods of decision-making, be dominated by a few Governments who seek to serve their own interests.

Above all, in a world where culture, ideas and public opinion should be the only determining factors, the present situation cannot continue and a fundamental change seems inevitable. We must strive to establish a new world system.

Secondly, any change must be deep-seated both in theory and in practice, encompassing all spheres of our life. Outdated methods of government that have caused the current problems in society cannot be used to bring about change and create a better world. Liberalism and capitalism, in particular the types that seek to dominate the world and to alienate people from spiritual and moral values, will never bring humankind happiness, since they are the principal source of all disasters, wars, poverty and deprivation. We have all seen how unfair economic structures controlled by certain political interests have been used to plunder the national wealth of countries for the benefit of a group of corrupt businesses. Existing structures are thus incapable of addressing the challenges that we face. The political and economic structures created after the Second World War that sought to dominate the world have failed, in short, to promote justice and lasting security.

Rulers whose hearts do not beat with love for humankind and who have abandoned ideas of justice can never provide humankind with the promise of peace and friendship. By the grace of God, Marxism is no more; it is history now. And the unhindered growth of capitalism will certainly meet the same fate because, based on the divine tradition of a principle in the Holy Koran, the deceitful one, like a bubble on the surface of water, will disappear. Only that which eternally serves the interests of human societies survives.

We must therefore all remain vigilant to prevent the pursuit of colonialism and discriminatory and inhuman goals disguised under slogans for change or in any new format. The world needs to undergo fundamental changes, and we must all engage collectively to bring them about in the right way. Through such efforts, no one and no Government would consider itself an exception to change or superior to others, or try to impose its will on others by proclaiming world leadership.

Thirdly, all of the problems that exist in our world today emanate from the fact that rulers have distanced themselves from human values, morality and the teachings of divine messengers. Regrettably, in the current state of international relations, selfishness and insatiable greed have taken the place of such humanitarian concepts as love, sacrifice, dignity and justice. Belief in the one God has been replaced with self-belief. Some have sought to take the place of God and insist on imposing their values and wishes on others. Lies have taken the place of honesty, hypocrisy has replaced integrity and selfishness has taken the place of sacrifice. Nowadays, deception in interactions is called foresight and statesmanship. Looting the wealth of other nations is called development efforts. Occupation is introduced as a gift in promotion of freedom and democracy. And defenceless nations are subjected to repression in the name of the defence of human rights.

Global problems will be resolved, justice administered and peace maintained only through the collective determination and cooperation of all nations and States. The era of a world polarized by the premises of hegemony or the domination by a few Governments is over. Today, we must rise together through collective commitment against the present challenges. We must take change seriously and work collectively to help others return to basic moral and human values.

Messengers were sent by God to show the light of truth to humankind. They came to make people aware of their individual and social obligations. Living in piety, having faith in Allah and judgment of human behaviour or conduct in the next world, believing in the primacy of justice in both lives, seeking happiness, well-being and security in the happiness, well-being and security of others, respecting humankind, making efforts to expand love and compassion against hostility — these were all paramount in the teachings

offered by the divine messengers of God, from Adam to Noah, Noah to Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ and the last Prophet, Muhammad, may peace be upon all of them. All of them came to eliminate war and ignorance, eradicate poverty and uproot discrimination in order to spread happiness to the entire world. They are the best gifts that almighty God has granted to human beings. If the belief in Entezar — that is, in patiently awaiting the return of justice to Earth — can become a common goal and we join hands to achieve prosperity for all, then there will be greater and more genuine hope for reform.

Fourthly, in my opinion, we have several important matters before us. The Secretary-General and the General Assembly can take the lead by undertaking the necessary measures to fulfil our shared goals on the basis of the following actions.

First, the United Nations should be restructured in order to transform this world body into an efficient and fully democratic organization, capable of playing an impartial, equitable and effective role in the international relations. The structure of the Security Council should be reformed, especially by abolishing the discriminatory privilege of the veto right. The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people should be restored by holding a referendum and free elections in Palestine to prepare an environment in which all Palestinian populations, including Muslims, Christians and Jews, can live together in peace and harmony. All types of interference in the affairs of Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East, as well as all countries of Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe, must be ended.

As our great Prophet said, a Government may survive with blasphemy, but never with oppression. The Palestinians continue to suffer oppression and their rights continue to be violated. Yet another group of Palestinians who lived in al-Quds al-Sharif were forced out of their homes as the occupiers and usurpers continue to destroy their residential area. Bombings in Afghanistan and Pakistan have not yet stopped, the Guantanamo prison has not yet been shut down, and there are still secret prisons in Europe.

The continuation of the present situation adds to hostilities and violence. Oppression and military aggression must be stopped. Regrettably, official reports concerning the brutalities of the Zionist regime in Gaza have not all been published. The Secretary-General and the United Nations have crucial

responsibilities in this respect, and the international community is impatiently waiting for the aggressors and the murderers of the defenceless people of Gaza to be punished.

Regarding the second action, current economic structures must be reformed and a new international economic order set up based on human and moral values and obligations. A new course is needed that would help promote justice and progress worldwide by allowing the potential and talents of all nations to flourish, thus bringing well-being to all and for future generations.

The third action is that international political relations must undergo reform on the basis of promotion of lasting peace and friendship, the eradication of arms races and the elimination of all nuclear, chemical and biological weapons to pave the way for all nations to have access to advanced and peaceful technologies for the advancement of the human race.

The fourth action is that we should reform cultural structures, promote respect for the diverse customs and traditions of all nations and foster moral values and spirituality aimed at strengthening the institution of the family, which is the backbone of all human societies.

For the fifth action, worldwide efforts must be made to protect the environment and fully observe the international agreements and arrangements to prevent the annihilation of nature's non-renewable resources.

My fifth point is that our nation has successfully gone through a glorious and fully democratic election, opening a new chapter for our country in the march towards national progress and enhanced international interactions. Once again, a large majority has entrusted me with this heavy responsibility.

And now, I want to declare that our great nation, which has made significant contributions both to world civilization and to the Islamic Republic of Iran itself, and as one of the most democratic and progressive Governments in the world, is ready to mobilize all its cultural, political and economic capabilities to engage in a constructive process aimed at addressing the international concerns and confronting the challenges that face human society. Our country, the builder of cultures, has itself been a principal victim of blind

terrorism and the target of all-out military aggression during the first decade of its revolution.

Throughout the past 30 years, we have been subject to the hostile attitudes of those who at one time supported, with all their might, Saddam's military aggression and his use of chemical weapons against us, and who at another time decided to take military action in Iraq to get rid of the same man.

Today, our nation seeks to create a world in which justice and compassion will prevail. We announce our commitment to participating in the process of building lasting peace and security worldwide for all nations, based on justice, spirituality and human dignity, while being dedicated to strongly defending our legitimate and legal rights.

To achieve those goals, our nation is prepared to warmly shake all hands which are extended to us in good faith. No nation can claim to be free of the need to change and reform in this journey towards perfection. We welcome real and humane changes and stand ready to actively engage in fundamental global reforms.

Therefore, we emphasize that the only path to continued safety and security is to return to monotheism and justice. That is the greatest hope and opportunity of all ages and generations. Without belief in God and commitment to the cause of justice, along with the fight against injustice and discrimination, the world structure will not be corrected.

Man is at the centre of the universe. Man's unique feature is his humanity, a humanity that seeks justice, piety, love, knowledge, awareness and all other higher values. These human values should be supported, and each and every fellow human being should be given the opportunity to develop them. Neglecting any of them is tantamount to the omission of an essential aspect of humanity. These are common elements which connect all human communities and which constitute the basis of peace, security and friendship.

Divine religions pay attention to all aspects of human life, including obedience to God, morality, justice, fighting oppression and endeavouring to establish just and good governance. The Prophet Abraham called for the oneness of God against Nimrod, as the Prophet Moses did the same against the Pharaohs. Jesus Christ and the Prophet Muhammad,

may peace be upon them, did the same against the oppressors of their own time. All of these men were threatened with death and were forced out of their homelands. Without resistance and objection, the face of the Earth will not be rid of injustice.

I turn now to my final point. The world is in continuous change and evolution. Mankind's promised destiny is the establishment of a pure humane life. This will come about when justice prevails around the globe and when every single human being enjoys respect and dignity. That will be the moment when mankind's path to moral and spiritual perfection will be opened and his journey to God and the manifestation of God's divine names will come to be. Mankind should strive to represent God's knowledge and wisdom, his compassion and benevolence, his justice and fairness, his power and art, and his kindness and forgiveness.

These will all come true under the rule of the perfect Man, the last divine source on Earth, Hazrat Mahdi, peace be upon him. He will be an offspring of the Prophet of Islam, who will re-emerge, and Jesus Christ, peace be upon him. Other noble and pious men will accompany him in the accomplishment of this grand universal mission. This is the belief in *entezar*: waiting patiently for the Imam to return; waiting patiently for the rule of goodness and the governance of the best, which he promises. This is a universal human notion and a source of the hope of nations for the betterment of the world.

They will come, and with the help of righteous people and true believers will realize man's long-standing desire for freedom, perfection, maturity, security, tranquillity, peace and beauty. They will come to put an end to war and aggression and to reveal all knowledge to the world, as well as spirituality and friendship. Yes indeed, mankind's bright future will come.

In waiting for that brilliant time to come and in a collective commitment, let us each do our part to pave the way and prepare the conditions for building that bright future. Long live love and spirituality. Long live peace and security. Long live justice and freedom.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Morales Ayma (*spoke in Spanish*): Once again, we meet at the United Nations to share concerns, problems and experiences and to discuss the various ways in which we can serve our peoples worldwide.

Since this morning I have listened closely to statements, starting with that of the Secretary-General — to whom I offer a special, revolutionary greeting — until this moment, when we just heard the President of Iran. In all of these statements, there has been great convergence on problems such as the financial crisis, problems arising from the environmental crisis and problems concerning stability and institutionalization of democracies in a number of countries. There have also been ideas and proposals such as those offered by the Secretary-General, who called for unity among Presidents and unity within the United Nations. I fully agree that it is important that we Presidents and Governments unite to meet the demands of our peoples, in order to resolve these crises.

I would say that in my country the crises have been imposed from above and from outside. We need unity within the United Nations for the sake of the equality of our peoples; we need unity for dignity; we need unity above all to tackle the deep economic divergences, the deep asymmetries between continents, between families and between countries. But it must be unity in a context of complementarity, in order to meet our peoples' demands.

There is an ongoing debate on the financial crisis and on climate change, as well as on the problems of democracy and the energy and food crises. I welcome a number of the statements that addressed and focused on the origins of this crisis. But the majority of Presidents and the majority of the statements referred only to the effects, not to the causes.

I would like to speak frankly to the Assembly — my listeners here, and to all others who are following the debates taking place in this global forum. I would like to say that the origin of these crises was the unbridled accumulation of capital in a few hands, the irretrievable looting of natural resources and the commercialization of Mother Earth. And above all, I believe their origin lies in an economic model, an economic system, namely, capitalism.

If we do not tell our peoples the truth about the origin of this crisis, then we will be misleading ourselves and the international community too. We will be misleading our peoples, who have great expectations of their Presidents and Governments and of forums such as this one.

Although we are promoting and seeking peace, in the light of our experience, we know that we will not find social peace while there is economic inequality, and all the less when there are military bases in some countries. These may be located on many continents, including Latin America and South America. How can we hold discussions when United States military bases provoke distrust among peoples?

I would like to briefly tell the Assembly that I was a victim of the military bases operating in my country before assuming the presidency, before the social movements were not merely opposed to policies but also actors in a new country of equality and social justice. All of us were victims of the United States military presence in Bolivia, and as victims we know what uniformed armed United States personnel can do in South American countries. For that reason, I would like to say that when there is a United States military base, particularly in Latin America — I do not know about their conduct in Europe or on other continents, but in Latin America, the presence of military bases is no guarantee of social peace or of democracy. Certainly, it cannot guarantee the integration of our countries, much less of the peoples who are seeking to bring about deep-wrought changes in our social, economic and cultural structures.

Now we have Honduras. If there is a United States military base in Honduras, why can this military base not guarantee democracy? It cannot because there are Presidents who change these countries, which are constantly threatened by military bases.

I hail the courage of our colleague, President Zelaya of Honduras, who is democratically and pacifically resisting with the aim of restoring democracy. My respect and admiration go to him as he strives together with his defiant people to uphold democracy. How good it would be if the United Nations, this great international organization, were to adopt a resolution issuing an ultimatum to the military dictatorship in Honduras to withdraw and restore the only internationally recognized President.

I am convinced that the United States Southern Command does not accept Latin American countries or their Presidents that are seeking liberation. I have even heard from some friends, comrades and brothers that they supported the dictatorships in Bolivia and elsewhere in Latin America. They say that the only reason there has been no coup d'état in the United States is that there is no United States Embassy in the United States. There are coups d'état occurring everywhere, but let me say that in September last year there was an attempted coup d'état in Bolivia, and thanks to the union forces and the involvement of the international community, particularly from the southern cone, we were able to halt that civilian — not military — coup d'état.

For these reasons, we are convinced that military bases cannot guarantee democracy, integration or social peace.

We have also been discussing the subject of climate change, and I would like to take this opportunity to propose a number of issues to the Assembly which are of the utmost importance for all of us who inhabit Mother Earth. For the indigenous movement, this is Mother Earth — or, for many others, planet Earth or the environment. For those of us who live in harmony with Mother Earth, not just in harmony with human beings, Mother Earth is something sacred. It is Mother Earth which gives life, which provides water, natural resources, oxygen. We all promote the well-being of our peoples. We are struggling and fighting and working for the well-being of our peoples, but first of all, we must ensure the well-being of Mother Earth.

If we cannot guarantee the well-being of Mother Earth, then it will be impossible to guarantee the well-being of our countrymen or of all the peoples on planet Earth. I have reached the conclusion that Mother Earth — or planet Earth — can and will exist forever with or without human life. But human life cannot exist without planet Earth — Mother Earth.

After having listened to many statements and after having listened to my brothers, I have reached the conclusion that at this point in time, in this new twenty-first century, it will be more important than ever before to defend the rights of Mother Earth than to defend human rights.

If we do not protect the rights of Mother Earth, there will be no point in defending human rights. I am prepared to discuss this concept, and sooner or later everyone will understand why it is so important to defend the rights of Mother Earth.

As we are currently discussing climate change, I propose to Presidents, representatives and all our other brothers and sisters who are listening throughout the world our very simple, three-point proposal.

First, the developed countries must acknowledge and pay the climate debt that they and all humankind owe Planet Earth.

Secondly, a court for climate justice must be established to try and to punish those who fail to meet their commitments and those who continue to damage Planet Earth. We need a structure that can quantify the damage caused by some countries and transnational companies, and therefore it is important that such a court for climate justice be established.

The third proposal is one of those that have been developed above all by rural and indigenous movements: the United Nations must draw up a declaration of the rights of Mother Earth, in order to defend the right to life, the right to the regeneration of bio-capacity, the right to a clean life and the right to harmony and the coexistence of us all.

I hope that these proposals will be taken into account during the discussions in Copenhagen. We also hope that Copenhagen will provide a grand solution to resolve the serious problems that affect us all, in all the countries of the world.

I also take this opportunity to take up some of the proposals made by a number of Presidents. If we want

to change the world, we must first change the United Nations. If we want to effect change in our countries, seeking equality and dignity for our compatriots, why not first change the structures of the United Nations?

Listening to what many other Presidents said about the Security Council, I felt that there were many points of agreement. We need a real democratization of the United Nations, for which I make the following suggestions.

The status of permanent membership of the Security Council and the right to veto must be abolished. It is not possible in the twenty-first century to maintain outdated totalitarian practices going back to the time of monarchies. All countries must have the same rights within the United Nations. Those who proclaim themselves to be the leaders of democracy should give up their privileges and accept true democratization of the Security Council. We must be responsible with democracy and begin to democratize the United Nations.

I shall soon end my short intervention, as I do not wish to exceed my time limit, in keeping with the discipline that our peoples teach us. But first I am sorry to have state a truth that may upset the Government of the United States. I had great hopes of President Obama. I welcome his closure of Guantanamo, which represents progress. But in addition the economic blockade of Cuba should be ended. That is my respectful request to the Government and people of the United States.

Bolivia, like Latin America as a whole, used to enjoy certain tariff preferences, but under ex-President Bush they were removed, because we were accused of not combating drug-trafficking and poverty. We know that that was a political decision, but ex-President Bush never took into account Bolivian norms or our Constitution.

Now, under President Obama's Government, we see documents which include references to our new Constitution, which, for the first time in the 183 years' existence of the Republic, was approved by a vote of the Bolivian people. There is a reference to article 56 and respect for private property. That strikes me as direct interference by the United States Government in the Constitution and other norms and standards, and I roundly reject it. What we want is diplomatic relations not of interference, but of cooperation and investment. While the new Constitution for the first time

guarantees private property and State property, fundamentally it guarantees collective property — property held by associations and cooperatives, and communal lands belonging to the indigenous, native movement.

In addition, an accusation is made against me in a United States report stating that current challenges include the explicit acceptance and encouragement of coca production at the highest levels of the Bolivian Government. That is to say that I encourage the cultivation of coca. It should be understood that growing the coca leaf is one thing and that cocaine is quite another. We do not defend cocaine; we shall fight it. Indeed, our proposal is zero cocaine. What I have just said does not mean having free cultivation of the coca leaf, though in its natural state it is beneficial and healthy for human life.

We have launched a campaign on decriminalizing the traditional consumption of the coca leaf. I guarantee that there will never be free cultivation of coca, but neither will there a zero coca leaf policy. But there is a zero cocaine policy. It cannot be said that I encourage coca cultivation in Bolivia. That is not true.

The Assembly will know that I come from the trade union and social movements, and that I was a union leader. Now President, fortuitously and for the time being, I am extremely concerned that it is said that the Government will dismantle the union movement by decree. How could I eliminate the unions, when they and the social movements are the backbone of the Evo Morales Government? I have built union headquarters and encouraged unions, workers and indigenous peoples, and yet I am accused of dismantling the unions.

President Obama may not be aware of the documents to which I have referred, which perhaps come from the State Department. I perfectly understand that sometimes when change is desired it is difficult to change State structures. But after reading the documents very carefully I wonder how it is possible for someone who has suffered discrimination to discriminate against another. At least in Latin America, the so-called Afro-Americans and Afro-Bolivians are the sectors most discriminated against in society, together with the so-called Indians or indigenous people. We are called "negroes" and "Indians". I do not understand how a black person who has been discriminated against and excluded can

discriminate against and exclude an Indian. It is a matter of grave concern.

It is to be hoped that those historic errors can be rectified, not for the good of the President, and not just for the good of Bolivians, but for the image of peoples, such as the people of the United States. I well understand that sometimes it is not easy to change structures which may work against our peoples.

Finally, I refer to some historical demands, such as the return of our access to the sea. Our two peoples, our brother republics, Chile and Bolivia, feel sufficient trust in each other to seek to resolve the issue of maritime access. I hope that it can be settled bilaterally. If not, intervention by the international community will be needed. Progress has been made. I feel that there is trust, which is needed in order to resolve any problem. Otherwise, important steps must be taken.

I thank my brothers and sisters for listening to me. I would like to continue to share their experience, proposals and concerns for the good of mankind as a whole.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Victor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of Ukraine.

Mr. Victor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Victor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Yushchenko (*spoke in Ukrainian; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): On behalf of Ukraine, I congratulate Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki of Libya on his election to preside over the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. I wish him every success in his activities.

Every year we all gather here at high level in the General Assembly to present our own national views on the life of our planet and its peoples. We strive to get the feeling of the overall emotional setting and pulse of human energy, ideas and quests. The emotional setting of Ukraine is open, principled and tolerant.

We have gathered here not to offend each other or exchange insults, but to resolve our common problems. I call upon all of us to use tolerance against bigotry, malignancy and arrogance. I say this on behalf of a nation whose last lustrum is unique in terms of challenges and progress.

We in Ukraine live in an atmosphere of strengthening freedom. This process is both grand and complex. Its difficulties discourage idealists and nurture authoritarian forces, yet they are another alpine peak for all who are enlightened to ascend. The milestone at which our nation stands today is the basis for moving forward to a free and safe life, to revive our own millennium-old tradition and its interrupted ties and to be again an active part of global civilization.

Our democratic choice is irreversible. As a free nation, we shall not accept any forms of interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States, any pressure on them or manifestations of authoritarian thinking in international relations. We remember the price paid by our fathers for our freedom, for the freedom of Europe and the world, and for the future independence of Ukraine.

We shall soon commemorate the sixty-fifth anniversary of the victory over fascism. This joint victory of the anti-Hitler coalition is sacred. The mission of all countries which remember the horrors of fascism is to avert any hint of a restoration of totalitarian ideology and its derivative: the policy of imperial ambitions, neglecting the value of human life and violating the right of peoples to sovereign national existence.

I raise this issue because we are witnessing the re-emergence of very disconcerting signals from the past, ranging from questioning the very existence of newly independent States to denying nations' own views on their past and future. We are concerned about the substitution of concepts and approaches. Cooperation, openness and friendship between nations are being explicitly confronted by aggressive national egotism, which ignores the interests of close partners

and dictates the right of the powerful. Unconcealed information wars, energy blackmail and economic blackmail, as well as interference in sovereign affairs, fall outside the civilized framework.

Most important, we strongly condemn and shall not accept any violations of fundamental international principles — in particular, territorial integrity and the inviolability of the frontiers of all sovereign States.

It is axiomatic for us that all United Nations Member States, and especially the permanent members of the Security Council, must be exemplary in abiding by the principles of international law, of equality of nations and of neighbourliness, for our Charter, which remains unbroken, entrusts the Security Council with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

Ukraine acts in strict compliance with the goals and principles of the United Nations, and expects the same from its partners and neighbours.

Today I have the honour to confirm Ukraine's resolve to become a Security Council member in 2016-2017.

Our country has been and will always remain a reliable partner of the United Nations in all peace and security matters and in collective actions fostering stability in every region, especially in Africa. This year I approved the strategy of Ukraine's international peacekeeping activity, which will consolidate our contribution and participation in this field.

Safety of peacekeepers has been constantly the focus of Ukraine's attention. As one of the initiators of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, we propose that the General Assembly consider additional measures to strengthen the legal protection of participants in peacekeeping operations.

Almost 15 years ago Ukraine voluntarily gave up the third largest nuclear potential and acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear State. We welcome the steps taken by the United States and the Russian Federation to elaborate a new agreement to replace the Treaty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, of 31 July 1991, which expires this year.

At the same time, Ukraine continues to count on the support of the Security Council permanent members for our proposal to enhance security assurances for non-nuclear States, in particular for those which have voluntarily renounced nuclear weapons or their development. That will become an important incentive for many countries.

Ukraine will continue to act responsibly and constructively in matters of military and security cooperation.

We strictly abide by Security Council resolutions, and adhere to all established international regimes. Our position in this sphere is consistent with all our international obligations. It is verified, balanced and unchangeable.

I wish to dwell on an issue of the utmost importance for Ukraine: the global fight against maritime piracy. We value all the efforts of the United Nations and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in this regard. However, the measures taken so far have not been sufficient.

Almost 60,000 Ukrainian citizens are employed on ships under foreign flags. Any developments on the high seas affect us directly. In the last seven years alone pirates have attacked 18 vessels with Ukrainian sailors on board, and in the last nine months alone 35 Ukrainian sailors have been taken hostage. It is no longer a local problem; it has become very dangerous and threatens us all. We shall not turn a blind eye to it.

Ukraine was among the sponsors of IMO resolution A.1002 (25), entitled "Piracy and armed robbery against ships operating in waters off the coast of Somalia", which laid the ground for further Security Council resolutions in that regard. We strongly support the elaboration of uniform, clear rules to fight pirates and to protect sailors. We are convinced that the General Assembly has to become a coordinating body for the efforts of all specialized institutions in this field. We call for a more active stance by those United Nations Members which are main countries of origin of marine workers and by those States and organizations capable of making an impact on the safety of international maritime navigation.

On behalf of Ukraine, I propose to examine carefully the idea of establishing in one of the African countries a regional centre under the United Nations aegis which would bring under its umbrella specialized

agencies, programmes and funds, as well as political offices, to counter piracy. I want to be clear: Ukraine will be actively engaged in all international endeavours, and we intend to join the European Union Atalanta anti-piracy naval operation.

As President of Ukraine, I urge the General Assembly to debate these very critical issues in a separate meeting.

We face manifold challenges that we can resolve only by concerted efforts. I am convinced that one of the most acute problems for us all is the global financial crisis. Ukraine welcomes decisions of multilateral forums, in particular those of the Group of 20, as the leading instrument to counter the crisis.

In this process, our Organization can and should play its role in preventing the financial perturbations from spinning out into social upheavals. Perhaps it is time to revisit the idea, put forward earlier by Ukraine and recently by a number of other countries, of the creation of a United Nations economic security council. The large scale of this proposal should not prompt us to shelve it or reject it altogether.

In addition, decisions on the financing of United Nations activities within regular reviews of the scale of assessments must be taken with due account of the global crisis.

The principal and most important objective for our universal Organization and for each of our countries is to protect common people from the crisis and to prevent the decline of their living standards.

Despite all the economic difficulties, Ukraine is aware of its responsibility to support other countries that have suffered even more. This year Ukraine has become a World Food Programme donor. We hope that our contribution will save millions of lives in Africa. I say to our dear partners that Ukraine understands very well your needs, and we shall strive to save people suffering from hunger.

We have gathered here today to get the feeling of the overall emotional setting of our planet. Ukraine's emotional setting is resolute, persevering and benevolent.

We believe in our Organization. We are capable of great achievements. I am firmly convinced of our strength to move forward confidently for the benefit of the world, our peoples and countries.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I thank the President of Ukraine for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Victor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Lech Kaczyński, President of the Republic of Poland

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Poland.

Mr. Lech Kaczyński, President of the Republic of Poland, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Lech Kaczyński, President of the Republic of Poland, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Kaczyński (*spoke in Polish; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): Sixty-four years since the foundation of the United Nations we recall the self-evident fact that the United Nations was created to prevent atrocities such as those that occurred during the Second World War, from 1939 to 1945. It was called into being in order to avoid a repetition of the failure of the League of Nations, the first worldwide organization, which tried to carry out its duties between the two world wars.

The United Nations over 64 years has undergone various twists and turns. There have been better and worse years, years when here in this Hall there were clashes between the forces of two camps, the so-called socialist camp and the free world. There were times when here in this Hall scores of new countries of Africa, Oceania and Asia emerged. There was also the time, 20 years ago, when, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there appeared many other new countries, and when others such as mine, Poland, gained real, not only formal, independence.

At that time the whole world believed that we had found a way to solve all problems, especially economic problems, using market economy rules, which meant a free economy and free movement of capital in all areas. We have to state clearly that, as we have heard here many times, in recent years this faith has been

undermined, and therefore I have to devote my address to the problem of the crisis to some extent.

This crisis is a new problem. Participating in a General Assembly session for the first time, I can state that all the earlier problems, such as conflicts, of which there are many, the more recent problem of climate change, and the problem of poverty, are not new. To them we should add the problem of health: AIDS, epidemics and so on.

However, the problem of the current crisis appeared in the last year. Before coming to it, I should like to refer to what the President of Ukraine said. There are many causes of conflict in the world, one being the violation of faith in territorial integrity. Because many new countries have emerged over the past dozens of years, it is clear that there will be differences of opinion over this or that territory. If force is used to resolve such differences, as it was last year against Georgia, this may give rise to fundamental problems. It could be the source of local wars, but it could also be the source of great conflicts, even conflicts on a world scale. On behalf of my country, I warn against this.

I return to the problem of the current crisis. I represent a country that continues to develop. We are the only country in the European Union that will this year record — albeit small — economic growth. This is due to some factors that are specific to my country, so I do not wish to dwell at length on the subject. However, it is clear that one reason for the crisis is that we place too much faith in markets and banking systems that become more and more complicated. Sooner or later that must lead to the outcomes that we all see.

What preventive measures can be taken? They are known, but it is difficult to implement them. I believe that the United Nations has a great opportunity here. It is not that there will be management of the global economy. Such attempts are doomed to failure and will lead to another crisis. But it is not true that we do not need new rules, new regulations, to deal with issues that have also been discussed today, including supervision and oversight over the banking sector. Perhaps that oversight should not be global in nature, but it must include countries where banks are under no control, because that is the source of an economic pathology, which often facilitates large-scale criminal activity, such as drug-trafficking.

Another problem that has been mentioned here is that of so-called tax havens. Mention can also be made of cheap flags of convenience for shipping. We understand that all those who use them do so to improve the situation in their countries; we realize that from the point of view of various countries, especially those that are not rich, there is a reason. I am not here to criticize them. But it is in our common interest to put an end to such practices. There is no other organization in the world that can do this but the United Nations, through the creation of international norms.

President Lula of Brazil spoke about certain very important problems, including those relating to financial agencies affiliated to the United Nations. In that regard, I refer to the problem of greater flexibility in programmes launched by the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank.

There is another issue: better use of certain organizations affiliated to the United Nations. Here I draw attention first to the International Labour Organization (ILO), which has been in existence for 80 years. It embraces almost all countries of the world and has about 2,500 employees. Should it not to a greater extent be a place for the formulation of programmes providing an alternative to liberal development? It seems that a reformed ILO could successfully perform that function. It requires a common effort, but it is feasible.

I am not talking about additional funds and financial means. I am talking about formulating alternative programmes that take the interests of workers into account to a greater extent than so far, and also a balance between different social groups, not only in the rich countries, but also in the poorer countries.

Today's address by the President of the United States pointed to the fact that a country that, whatever one thinks about it, is the most powerful in the world today, is now approaching the problems of the United Nations differently. This creates a certain possibility for the Organization, our Organization. This is an opportunity that can be taken if the United Nations peacekeeping operations become more effective. We should appreciate the operations that have been carried out so far, but we need certain organizational changes to make the activity more effective. What I am saying does not exclude the tasks taken up by, for instance,

NATO. But the United Nations should play the leading role.

There is also the problem of United Nations reform, especially reform of the Security Council. I do not wish to dwell on the subject now, but we are all aware that it is a very important issue, in that there is a basic difference between what was established 64 years ago and what we have now.

In the past the United Nations has placed a great deal of emphasis on climate change and climate issues. Much has been said about the subject, and I do not want to repeat it. However, I strongly emphasize that this is a very important issue, requiring great sensitivity. If richer countries want to become strongly involved in climate protection, they must realize that the weaker States should be assisted, because this very just cause cannot be dealt with in such a way as to make development easier for some and harder for others. We should always bear that in mind in thinking about the solidarity of all nations and about the objectives given to the United Nations 64 years ago.

Last, but not least, I turn to an issue that has not been discussed at great length, except in regard to piracy: international terrorism. Today it is an important problem. The situation in some countries, such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, is very significant proof of that. Terrorism has its sources, not all of which are related to external ideologies. There are also some objective premises, and we understand this. We also understand that the United Nations can play a greater role than it has played so far.

Poland is a member of NATO, and is very much involved in operations. But we understand that under international law the only 100 per cent legitimacy for such operations derives from the United Nations. This is very important now and also for the future, because we must realize that the problems of conflict, crisis and terrorism cannot be solved within a few years.

Many times today we heard that the United Nations is entering a new stage. We believe that this will be a phase of its greatness, because we have learned from the past that this great world experiment, which has many times passed the test on a global scale, will continue to do so in the near future.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Poland for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Lech Kaczyński, President of the Republic of Poland, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 8 (continued)

General debate

Address by Mr. Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of Australia.

Mr. Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President: I have great pleasure in welcoming The Honourable Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Rudd (Australia): I come to the Assembly, as Australia has each year since the first session of the General Assembly in 1946, and I come in the same spirit, to seek solutions to the great challenges of our age and together help give those solutions effect.

The challenges are not new. They are reflected in the Preamble to the Charter which we, as an international community, crafted together: “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”, to advance economic growth and social progress for all, “to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights ... in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small”. All those great undertakings were to be reflected in a new body of international law.

Two thirds of a century later these great international values remain constant, while the challenges to which we apply them are subject to continuing change. It is on the current challenges facing the global order that I wish to speak to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session today: the global financial crisis, the unfinished business of the Doha Round, the unfolding crisis of the planet itself, unresolved questions of nuclear weapons 20 years after the end of the cold war, and the future of global governance itself.

Just on a year ago, just down the road from here, a destructive chain of events triggered the worst global financial crisis in three quarters of a century. It was just on a year ago that I addressed the Assembly for the first time, 10 days after the collapse of Lehman

Brothers, to reflect on the challenges which lay ahead for the proper regulation of global financial markets.

That reform programme is now under way, through the Group of 20 (G-20), the Financial Stability Board and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). But there remains much work to be done to prevent the unrestrained greed of unregulated financial markets that has wrought such economic carnage across the world in the past 12 months from sowing the seeds of future financial crises.

The global financial crisis has been a wake-up call to the international community to reform the institutions of global governance, and a wake-up call that our system of global governance today is in need of radical reform. Because the truth is that the failure of these institutions is not just a matter of concern for Governments and for diplomats and for economists; the price of the failure of these institutions has been paid by working people and their families right across the world.

The events on Wall Street spread rapidly and indiscriminately to every corner of the globe, from London to Lima, from Beijing to Barcelona, from Melbourne to Mumbai, to developed and developing economies. This global financial crisis and its ensuing economic and employment crisis has been no respecter of national boundaries, and no respecter of peoples.

Australia has been no exception. The global financial crisis saw the Australian stock market fall by 55 per cent. It wiped around A\$ 150 billion from the retirement savings of Australian workers. And it led to tens of thousands of Australians losing their jobs. We expect more job losses to follow. Behind each of these statistics lie the faces of working Australians, who have seen their savings diminished, their financial security eroded and their job security threatened.

I think of places like Liverpool in Sydney, where the decline in its light manufacturing base has led to an increase in unemployment of 4.5 per cent over the past year, and where now 19,000 local people are without work; like the tourist destination of Cairns in far North Queensland, where unemployment has risen by 3.7 per cent over the past year, meaning that 13,300 people are now out of work in that area; and like the south-eastern suburbs of Perth, where unemployment has risen by 3.3 per cent in the past year, leaving 12,800 people in that community without a job as well.

In communities like those across Australia the global recession is hurting in very real ways, just as in communities like them across the world the global recession is hurting in very real ways. We can never forget these men, these women, and their families, as we seek to find a path out of this global recession.

While our global economic system failed comprehensively to prevent the crisis, the G-20 Governments have rallied to reduce the damage and prevent systemic collapse. Through the agency of the G-20, for the first time involving heads of Government from the major developed and developing economies, Governments acted in concert to provide around \$13.6 trillion-worth of support to directly stabilize the global financial system; to inject \$5.5 trillion-worth of fiscal stimulus into the global economy; to provide \$1.1 trillion in resources to the international financial institutions, to give markets confidence that any subsequent collapses could be dealt with; to develop also an integrated framework of toxic asset management to repair the balance sheets of many major banks; and to initiate a comprehensive financial markets reform programme, through the Financial Stability Board.

The IMF has assessed that these extraordinary interventions succeeded in breaking the fall in what was an economic crisis spiralling out of control.

But the truth is that our global economic recovery is far from certain, and that many twists and turns lie ahead. Furthermore, the institutions of global economic governance are facing new challenges. First, the financial market reform programme must be completed and implemented to prevent a future crisis. Secondly, in anticipation of global economic recovery, we must agree on a framework for the coordinated withdrawal of our emergency interventions. And, thirdly, and most critically, we must articulate a new framework for sustainable future economic growth, a framework that does not simply return to business as usual, based on unsustainable financial imbalances and excessive consumption, fuelled by consumer and corporate debt and irresponsible risk-taking in systemically significant financial institutions.

One of the failures of the old growth model of the last decade was the lack of effective global economic coordination. This allowed imbalances to grow unchecked and financial institutions to remain inadequately supervised. As we move towards

recovery, we must build a framework to foster both growth and balance in the global economy. The IMF estimates that effectively implemented coordination between major economies could add significantly to global growth — an additional 10 per cent to global output, or around \$6 trillion over a five-year period. To achieve this coordination dividend the G-20 will need to build on the structures of cooperation that have been established during the crisis and apply them to the new challenges of the global recovery.

In Pittsburgh we have a historic opportunity to agree on a framework to deliver effective coordination of our national economic policies. This framework should have four key elements.

First, G-20 members should agree on a common objective to achieve balanced and sustainable growth. Secondly, G-20 members should outline their own national economic strategy and identify how it contributes to our common objectives. Thirdly, the IMF should analyse individual national economic plans to determine whether they are consistent and collectively adequate to achieve sustainable and balanced global growth. And, fourthly, this report should be submitted to the G-20 to form the basis of peer review, which would identify specific risks and vulnerabilities for the future. This framework should be consistent with, and an important input to, the development of a set of global principles, such as the current proposal from Germany for a charter for sustainable economic activity.

The other great global challenge of our age is climate change. With only 74 days remaining until Copenhagen, the Governments of the world are far from agreement. Enough has been said about the need for action on climate change, but as of today not enough action has been taken. Our collective political will to date has not been adequate to meet the task. For too long discussions between developed and developing countries have degenerated into mutual recrimination, with developing countries accusing developed countries of failing to meet their obligations, given their undeniable responsibility for the bulk of greenhouse gas emissions already in the atmosphere, and developed countries warning the major emerging economies that unless they take action global warming will increase to unacceptable levels, based on emerging economy emissions alone.

The trouble is that both arguments are right. What is required globally is the leadership to embrace this truth and respond to it accordingly, because the truth is that all our Governments need to reach beyond their self-interests and instead fashion a grand bargain between the developed and the developing countries of the world: a grand bargain on climate change which embraces both historical and future responsibility; a grand bargain which is anchored in the science of climate change and the need to keep temperature rises within 2 degrees Celsius to avoid catastrophic climate change; a grand bargain embracing the three great challenges of climate change which we are yet to resolve.

Those three challenges are to answer these questions: what binding targets and commitments must developed and developing countries adopt to keep temperature rises within 2 degrees Celsius; what public and private climate change financing arrangements are necessary to support the mitigation and adaptation measures we need to implement in the future; and what technology transfer do we need to undertake in renewable energy, in carbon capture and storage, in energy efficiency and in the avoidance of deforestation and forest degradation to bring about real reductions in greenhouse gas emissions?

In the period ahead, the grand bargain we must strike needs to resolve all three of those challenges, as each is inextricably dependent on the other. We must make use of all available mechanisms for international cooperation, including the Major Economies Forum and the G-20, to achieve success in the negotiations. For us all, this will be a test of our leadership, leadership which seeks to lift our collective vision beyond today and instead focus on the needs of tomorrow.

But time is short. As Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, I know that time is already running out for the island States of the Pacific. Coastal inundation is not a prospect; it is a reality. Fifty per cent of the population of those island States reside within 1.5 km of the coast. The South Pacific is part of the human face of climate change. And that is why Australia, nationally, regionally and globally, stands ready to play its part in acting on this great moral, environmental and economic challenge of our time.

This Organization was born in the shadow of nuclear weapons; that shadow remains today. One truth

remains absolutely clear: the proliferation of nuclear weapons can never make any country more secure. The nuclear test by North Korea this year was rightly condemned across the international community. It reiterates that the only path to safety is through the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. Australia is encouraged by the commitment of the United States and Russia to further reduce their nuclear arsenals, but the international community must also progress the broader disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has played a crucial role in limiting the spread of nuclear weapons, but the Treaty today is under grave challenge. We must work to ensure that its global security benefits are reinforced by a successful Review Conference in 2010. To reinvigorate global consensus and activism ahead of that Conference and beyond, Australia and Japan last year established the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, which in the next few months will produce its final report. Its aim is to chart a practical and realistic course to achieve a strengthened non-proliferation disarmament regime, leading to the ultimate elimination of nuclear arsenals.

Tomorrow's Security Council summit on non-proliferation and disarmament is important for us all. We must not miss the opportunity it offers to summon the political resolve to move towards a nuclear-weapons-free world.

The challenges of global governance extend beyond the global financial crisis, climate change and the threat of nuclear weapons. The realization of the Millennium Development Goals is fundamental to the elimination of extreme poverty. It remains an obscenity that in 2009, after an age of unprecedented global prosperity, 1.5 billion of our fellow human beings are living in extreme poverty. That is a core reason why the Australian Government has committed to increasing official development assistance to 0.5 per cent of gross national income, to help close the development gap which has been widening in many Pacific island countries, while also helping, where

possible, to deal with poverty elsewhere in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Parallel to the Millennium Development Goals, the Doha Development Round has now been going for eight years. This is too long. The negotiating gap between us all is not wide, but the deficit in political will to conclude the Round seems vast. As the world searches for a new growth formula to sustain long-term economic recovery, surely Doha represents one critical element? Australia, as one of the lead negotiators within the Doha Round, remains ready to help bridge the negotiating gap.

Let the Assembly also not forget the continuing critical work of the United Nations across the full spectrum of global governance — issues concerning international peacekeeping operations, humanitarian operations, food security, women, health, children and refugees — all hallmarks of a civilized global order.

The United Nations is not a place; it is not an institution. The United Nations is us, “We, the peoples of the United Nations”, as the Charter begins. It is we who must find solutions to the problems we face, build consensus around those solutions, and implement them. This Organization had its beginnings not in an act of will, though will was certainly needed, but in an act of imagination, an idea of what the world should and could be. This is the challenge of leadership: to imagine a future worth having and then craft that vision into a practical and present reality.

That was the challenge to which our forebears rose in 1945. That is the challenge to which our generation must now rise for the future.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Australia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The meeting rose at 9.15 p.m.