

62nd SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TODAY AT THE GA

GENERAL DEBATE

25 SEPTEMBER 2007

GENERAL DEBATE

Speakers

LEGEND

HS= Head of State
HG= Head of Government
FM= Foreign Minister
VP= Vice-President

Morning Session

UN Secretary-General
President of the General Assembly

BRAZIL (HS)
UNITED STATES (HS)
GHANA (HS)
KAZAKHSTAN (HS)
HONDURAS (HS)
QATAR (HS)
FRANCE (HS)
NICARAGUA (HS)
TFYR MACEDONIA (HS)
MALAWI (HS)
CHILE (HS)
1. PORTUGAL (HG) (EU)

Afternoon Session

SRI LANKA (HS)
PARAGUAY (HS)
SENEGAL (HS)
SOUTH AFRICA (HS)
ARGENTINA (HS)
IRAN (ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF) (HS)
INDONESIA (HS)
PANAMA (HS)
AFGHANISTAN (HS)
SLOVAKIA (HS)
MONACO (HS)
ESTONIA (HS)
ANGOLA (HS)
1. ITALY (HG)
2. GERMANY (HG)

UNITED NATIONS WEBCAST

<http://www.un.org/webcast>

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

<http://www.un.org/ga>

GA BROADCAST BY TELEPHONE

x7.9420 (GA floor), x7.9421
(English),
x7.9422 (French)

Summary

Today's world requires a strong, robust and empowered United Nations focused on results over rhetoric and with more attention "to getting things done," said United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in opening the General Debate.

"My vision is for an administration focused on results – efficient, directed, pragmatic and accountable...representing excellence, integrity and pride in serving the global good," he said.

Speaking on the theme of "A Stronger United Nations for a Better World," the Secretary-General listed the challenges he was committed to meeting in the year ahead, including ending the tragedy in Darfur, promoting stability in the Middle East, focusing more attention on disarmament and curbing weapons' proliferation. He urged the Human Rights Council to live up to its responsibilities and added that more work is needed to translate the "*responsibility to protect*" from words to deed.

Highlighting the commitment of UN humanitarian workers and the successful re-organization of the Department of Peacekeeping, he acknowledged the UN still needed a fresh approach to management reform.

"We need an internal climate change at the UN," he said.

Several other delegations echoed the Secretary-General's optimism, stating that effective multilateralism through the United Nations is the only way to face issues such as climate change, sustainable development and global security.

"The world's major conflicts cannot be handled by any one power," said Qatar, adding that the UN is the political embodiment of the international community's principles, laws and broad aspirations to peace.

Germany said that today's crises can only be solved multilaterally, calling the UN "a central element in the global security structure."

However, countries like South Africa deplored the United Nations as representing only the skewed distribution of power in the world to the detriment of the disenfranchised and the poor.

Iran added that the credibility of the Security Council has been tarnished by the "monopolistic powers" that prevent it maintaining of international peace and security based on justice. It concluded that the General Assembly, which is free from the pressures and threats from big powers, should be considered as the most important pillar of the UN.

Sri Lanka added said that the UN has a mixed record of achievement, as its activities are characterized by countless poorly coordinated, ineffectively designed, ineptly staffed, overlapping programmes with unnecessary inter-agency competition.

Highlights

Climate Change

Most delegations expressed their appreciation for the selection of climate change as the General Debate's theme and acknowledged the UN's role in facilitating new partnerships and new frameworks for ensuring that developing and developed countries operate in tandem and with equal resolve.

South Africa said that the state of climate change discussions seems out of step with the science. It said that the starting point for any future regime must be equity, striking a balance between environmental imperatives and ensuring sustainable development. "Any deal on the 'fair use of the ecological space' will have to be balanced by a deal on giving all countries a 'fair chance in the development space.'"

Citing a significant depletion in the Ozone layer, Chile called for a new global political consensus to deal with climate change, based on a "shared but differentiated" set of responsibilities

Brazil said that social equity is our best weapon against the planet's degradation, linking environmental protection and climate change with development and called upon highly industrialized countries to set an example by fully complying with their commitment under the Kyoto Protocol.

The US and the EU said they appreciated the discussion on climate change led by the SG on Monday. The EU recommended pursuing an upgrading of UNEP to a specialized agency, a United Nations Environment Organization.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation

Reiterating that its nuclear activities had been peaceful and transparent, Iran called UN Security Council sanctions "illegal" and announced that the issue of its nuclear issue would now move out of the Security Council and be monitored again by the IAEA.

Germany said that Iran has continuously worked on its nuclear programme in clear contradiction to the IAEA and to the UN. It added that Iran ignores Security Council resolutions and is blatantly threatening Israel. "Let's not fool ourselves if Iran were to acquire the nuclear bomb, the consequences would be disastrous," Germany said. It called upon the international community to remain unified and decisive in its response to Iran's provocation. "The world does not have to prove to Iran that Iran is building a nuclear bomb. It is Iran that has to convince the world that it is not striving toward such a bomb," Germany said.

Kazakhstan said that nuclear non proliferation has turned into an asymmetric agreement, as it provides for sanctions applicable only to non-nuclear States. If nuclear powers call for banning the development of nuclear weapons, they themselves should set an example of reduction and renunciation of nuclear arsenals, it said.

The EU and the US stated that is committed to uphold, implement and further strengthen the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation framework.

Terrorism

The EU stated that efforts to counter terrorism should be in accordance with International Law and with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The adoption of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the General Assembly was a significant achievement.

Sri Lanka highlighted its own battle with terrorism and requested the international community to conclude what it called endless negotiations on the subject and prioritize a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

UN Reform

The EU welcomed the report of the high-level panel on System-Wide Coherence.

France in particular, also expressed its committed to strengthen the UN by reforming the membership of the Security Council to include developing countries.

Brazil stated that there is a need for increased participation of developing countries in the major international decision-making bodies, the UN-Security Council, in particular, and appreciated the proposal by France.

The US endorsed Japan as a potential permanent member to the Security Council.

HIV/AIDS

The US stated it had doubled its Emergency Plan for AIDS relief to \$30 billion.

Poverty and Hunger

The United States, while noting that more than half the world's food assistance comes from the U.S., announced its plan to alleviate hunger by purchasing crops of local farmers in Africa and other places as opposed to shipping in food from the developed world.

Calling for stepped-up global efforts to reduce inequality and new international trade relations based on balanced and fair rules, several countries, including Qatar, Brazil and the United States urged political will to reinvigorate the Doha round of trade talks.

The US said a successful Doha round would mean real and substantial openings in agriculture, goods and services as well as real and substantial reductions in trade distorting subsidies.

Regional/Country Issues

Chad

The EU welcomed UNAMID and reaffirmed its support for a multinational force in eastern Chad.

Iraq

Qatar said that last month's Security Council resolution 1770 on Iraq has partly restored to the United Nations its rightful role in addressing Iraq's tragedy after it has been proven that it is no longer possible for that matter to remain confined to one State or an alliance of States.

Kosovo

The EU stated that it shares the SG's views that the status quo in Kosovo is not sustainable and supports the ongoing efforts of the Troika, to bring the parties closer together and obtain a comprehensive political solution that will lead to a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo.

The Federal Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia said that it did not agree with the idea of partitioning Kosovo along ethnic lines, preferring demarcation of the Kosovo border along technical lines.

Middle East

Most delegations expressed their concern about the instability in the region. France and the US, reiterated their wish to see security and peace in the Middle East, which lies in a two-state solution. The EU stated that reactivation of the Middle East Peace Process remains a priority for the International community. The EU is also committed to assuring Lebanon's unity and territorial integrity.

Myanmar

The US stated that it was outraged by the situation in Burma, where a "brutal regime deny their people the fundamental rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and announced a series of steps such as the tightening of economic sanctions on the leaders of the regimes and their financial backers, the imposing of an expanded visa ban for the responsible authorities and their families as well as continuing to support the "efforts of humanitarian groups working to alleviate suffering in Burma."

Somalia

Ghana said that the United Nations should expedite its planning for the deployment of a peacekeeping force to replace the existing African Union-led mission in Somalia, given the scale of the troubles faced by the African country.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka said that despite brutal terrorism of the past 25 years, its government maintains a policy and openness for all human rights and toward a number of high-level officials that visited Sri Lanka recently.

Sudan

The US urged the United Nations to live up to its promise to promptly deploy peacekeeping forces to Darfur and appreciates France's leadership in helping to stabilize Sudan's neighbours.

Zimbabwe

The US stated that the behavior of Mugabe's regime is an assault on its people and that the United Nations must insist on change in Harare.