

62nd SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TODAY AT THE GA

GENERAL DEBATE

28 SEPTEMBER 2007

GENERAL DEBATE

Speakers

**LEGEND**

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

**Morning Session**

LEBANON (HS)  
MARSHALL ISLANDS (HS)  
PHILIPPINES (HG)  
SAMOA (HG)  
MALAYSIA (HG)  
ST VINCENT AND THE  
GRENADINES(HG)  
MAURITIUS (HG)  
ANTIGUA AND  
BARBUDA (HG)  
MONTENEGRO (HG)  
FIJI (HG)  
SAINT LUCIA (PM)  
PALESTINE (HL)

**Afternoon Session**

CAPE VERDE (HG)  
DOMINICA (HG)  
TURKEY (HG)  
SAN MARINO (HG/FM)  
LUXEMBOURG (DPM)  
TUNISIA (FM)  
BULGARIA (DPM)  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION (FM)  
CHINA (FM)  
EGYPT (FM)  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (FM)  
AUSTRIA (FM)  
BAHRAIN (FM)  
SINGAPORE (FM)  
BELARUS (FM)  
JORDAN  
SPAIN (FM)  
REPUBLIC OF KOREA (FM)  
SWEDEN  
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM (FM)  
ICELAND (FM)  
BENIN  
ROMANIA  
JAPAN

**Summary**

Several delegations representing Small Island Developing States used today's addresses to the General Assembly to warn of the extreme vulnerability of low-lying coastal areas to climate change, calling for increased responsibility from the worst polluters and for the creation of a special fund to adapt their economies and infrastructure.

Speakers from the Caribbean nations of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda and St. Lucia, African island states of Mauritius and Cape Verde, and the Pacific islands of Samoa and the Marshall Islands all echoed a call heard throughout the debate for a climate change framework based on common but differentiated responsibilities, requiring developed countries to commit to binding emissions reductions and developing countries to commit to making better use of their natural resources.

"Obviously we have failed badly as custodians of the planet and its future," said Samoa, adding it was imperative that a successor pact to the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions be devised "that is effective, binding, capable of swift implementation and universally owned and respected by the 192 UN Member States."

However they differentiated themselves from other developing nations as being mere inches above sea level – and on the front line of climate change's disastrous effects.

"If the projections of sea-level rise prove to be true, we will be facing a disaster of unimaginable proportions," Cape Verde warned.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines offered the example of its banana industry, a major economic sector, which has been repeatedly devastated by increasingly intense hurricanes making the island economy as a while more vulnerable to weather shocks.

Delegations also called on affluent nations to increase their level of spending towards an adaptation fund to help the most vulnerable States adjust their economies and infrastructure to cope with the impact of global warming.

The Marshall Islands called upon the international community to develop and resource realistic financial plans to support conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Other prominent issues where peace and security in the Middle East and non-proliferation of arms. Austria, Bahrain, Bulgaria, China, Egypt, Korea, Marshall Islands, The United Arab Emirates, Russia and Saint – Lucia expressed their concern and called for a better respect of the non-proliferation regime. Many Arab countries expressed their deep concern about the situation in Palestine, and in the case of Lebanon and Iraq called upon foreign parties not to interfere with the reconciliation process.

**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)

## Highlights

### Climate Change

Cap Verde highlighted the threat of draught and desertification in the West African sub-region and stated that too much time had been wasted in discussions delaying the formulation of strategies for effective adaptation and mitigation.

China stated that climate change is ultimately an issue of development. Climate change 'has arisen in the course of development and can only be resolved through development', said China, that called Member States to uphold the United Nations Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. China has set the target to discharge 10% of its major pollutants and increase forest coverage by 20% until 2010.

### Peacekeeping

Russia stated that it is in the Member States common interest to use more actively the UN peacekeeping capabilities and that they could be improved by more effective use of the Military Staff Committee.

### Human rights

China stated, that the Human Rights Council should become a platform for dialogue and cooperation rather than an arena of political confrontation.

### HIV/AIDS

St. Vincent and the Grenadines said that the six leading causes of death in the Caribbean were disease, cancer, diabetes, stroke, injuries and hypertension – each of which claimed more lives than HIV. It called upon WHO and PAHO to, together with Caribbean nations, devise effective strategies to combat these diseases.

Mauritius argued that HIV/AIDS is slowing development in sub-Saharan Africa, and undermining the ability of the region to attain the MDGs.

### Gender equality

Antigua and Barbuda highlighted gender equality and women's empowerment as goals for the international community to strive towards.

Austria welcomed the Secretary-General's nomination of women Special Representatives in Liberia, Sudan and Lebanon saying "women need to be given a fair share of positions in international mediation and peace building efforts".

### Interfaith dialogue

The Philippines said that it has no tolerance for human rights violations at home or abroad and that it had taken active steps to advance the process of peace in Muslim and Christian areas focused on interfaith dialogue, economic development and mutual security.

Malaysia said it supports the efforts to generate understanding between the followers of different traditions, including efforts that promote Islam as a religion that espouses universalism and tolerance. It said that Muslims have a responsibility to present the face of Islam as one that abhors violence overall and particularly violence among Muslims.

Palestine said that Islam is a humane religion and objecting to any attempt to portray Islam in an unfair manner. It said that Islam is a religion that opposes killing, terrorism and murder. It is against extremism; it is against closing inward, adding that attempts to create a conflict among religions is one of the methods of terrorists today. To counteract this trend, it emphasized the importance of the dialogue among civilizations.

### Disarmament/Nuclear non-proliferation

China stated that it would continue to play a constructive role in advancing the process of the Six-Party Talks and denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Referring to Iran, China stated that it should honor its due international obligations but that its right to peaceful use of nuclear energy should also be fully respected.

The United Arab Emirates welcomed the recent agreement between the IAEA and Iran on a fixed time schedule for IAEA inspectors to solve the outstanding issues concerning Iran's nuclear programme.

The restoration of the integrity and relevance of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime has the highest priority for Korea that sees the Six-Party Talks as the main vehicle through which to resolve the DPRK nuclear issue.

The Marshall Islands called for collective efforts to overcome disarmament and non-proliferation stalemates, citing that the fallout from nuclear weapons that were tested on the islands from 1946-1958 continues to haunt its people. It called upon the United Nations and other countries with experience in this area to help the Marshall Islands overcome the environmental and health problems related to radiation exposure.

Saint Lucia highlighted the threat that small arms pose to their country. The Prime Minister, Mr. Stephenson King, called on nations that produce small arms to cease to do so, as the proliferation of small arms greatly hurts developing nations.

Russia stated that the possibility of deploying weapons in space brings about a serious threat and calls upon the international community to conclude an agreement to prohibit the installation of weapons of any type in space.

### **Terrorism**

Russia stated there is a pressing need to use any means available to strengthen the leading role of the UN in fighting terrorism. The organization's activities should be based on a comprehensive framework, including the Global Counterterrorism Strategy adopted last year.

Egypt regretted that efforts to challenge international terrorism had been undermined by narrow minded, domestic political agendas. It said the international community had failed to focus on the eradication of the hotbeds of international terrorism, which were not numerous six years ago, and added that the international community should have dealt with the 'chronic conflicts in the middle east, foremost the Arab-Israeli conflict and its crux, the Palestinian Question'. Any efforts to achieve stability and security without settling the Palestinian question would fail, concluded Egypt.

### **Region/Country issues**

#### **Caucasus**

Turkey and Bulgaria mentioned in particular the 'frozen' conflicts in the Caucasus, which continue to jeopardize peace and stability in the region. Turkey called for solutions that respected the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan and Georgia and added that it would continue to invest into infrastructure such as the pipelines Baku-Ceyhan and Baku-Erzurum to foster stability in the region.

#### **Darfur**

China stated that the dialogue and consultation among the United Nations, the African Union and the Sudanese Government is an effective mechanism for resolving the Darfur issue.

#### **Iraq**

The United Arab Emirates expressed its deep concern 'over the growing number of Iraqi refugees seeking asylum in neighbouring countries and the resulting tragic humanitarian situation'. It also expressed its support for the efforts being made to promote reconstruction in Iraq, and stressed its firm belief that all concerned countries should display respect for the national sovereignty of Iraq and called upon all parties to cooperate to end the cycle of violence.

Jordan stated that tremendous burdens have been put on the economies, resources and infrastructure of the countries in the region by the huge numbers of Iraqis that are seeking refuge. It also mentioned that the international community offers little help.

Turkey stated that it is its highest priority to restore stability in the region and that it will continue to diversify its cooperation with the Iraqi Government and support the process of political dialogue and national reconciliation.

'Iraq has become a source of destabilization for the whole region', said Russia and called upon the Secretary General to take an active role given the additional UN powers on this issue.

Egypt called for Iraqi leaders who seek consensus, dialogue and cooperation to build up a modern developed state and called for foreign parties to cease their influence on the reconciliation process.

#### **Lebanon**

Lebanon said since the adoption of resolution 1701, which ended last year's war in Lebanon. It said that it is still in the phase of cessation of hostilities and have not yet moved to the phase of a ceasefire. It said that full implementation of resolution 1701 requires that Lebanon regains control over key areas of occupation, the release of Lebanese prisoners held in Israeli jails, restores Lebanon's legitimate rights over its water resources, and receives maps of landmines and sites of cluster bombs, he added.

Lebanon said that open hearings on the proposed Special Tribunal to try those suspected of involvement in the February 2005 assassination of Lebanon's Prime Minister Rafik Hariri could help quell controversy.

Looking toward its upcoming presidential elections, Lebanon spoke out against outside interference, which could instigate hatred and increase tension and which will have repercussions not only on the elections but on the safety of Lebanese as well.

The United Arab Emirates welcomed the United Nations efforts to put pressure on Israel to fulfill its legal obligations resolution 1701 and particular mentioned the United Nations request for the provision of detailed maps and coordinates of landmines and cluster bombs targets in south Lebanon.

Egypt highlighted the Lebanon model of co-existence as important and urged its leaders to engage in dialogue.

Jordan and the Arab Group condemned the recent assassination of Antoine Ghanem, in Lebanon.

### **Myanmar**

Korea expressed its deep concern about the current situation in Myanmar while San Remo expressed its solidarity to the families of the victims.

Japan stated that it is 'extremely regrettable that the crackdown on the demonstrations in Myanmar has caused casualties, including the death of a Japanese citizen. Japan demands that the Government of Myanmar make every effort to resolve the situation through dialogue.

### **oPt**

Palestine expressed its gratitude for the United Nations and its role in Palestinian affairs. Abbas noted that the UN has affirmed rights to Palestinian people in political, social and economic realms. Abbas also expressed appreciation for UNRWA's work with Palestinian refugees. It reaffirmed its commitment to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, urged the international community to support the renewed peace process and highlighted that any results from future peace talks would be put before the Palestinian people in the form of a referendum. It said he had recently met with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to discuss pressing issues, adding that the upcoming conference offers an opportunity to be able to settle all matters, including those having to do with Jerusalem, the return of refugees, water and security.

Palestine criticized groups who sought to impose their political will by force or by using armed revolt. It argued that Palestinians reject backward-looking ideologies that utilize violence to gain political advantage and called for an end to policies promoting colonial expansion at the expense of the Palestinian people.

The United Arab Emirates renewed its support for the Palestinian National Authority and stressed that no solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is possible without Israel's acceptance of the Arab Initiative, which is based on the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Jordan added that Israel will never enjoy the security which it seeks and the Middle East region will not enjoy stability unless the Palestinian people get their national rights through the establishment of an independent, contiguous and viable Palestinian state.

China supports the cause of the Palestinians and expressed its hopes that Israel will promptly end their disputes through political negotiations on the basis of relevant UN resolutions and the principle of 'land for peace'.

### **Kosovo**

Montenegro said that it thinks the direct negotiations that have started today on the future of Kosovo will bear fruit and said it strongly supports the negotiating process.

Russia reiterated that the settlement of the Kosovo problem is only possible within the framework of international law based on negotiations. Unilateral steps will not lead to a lasting peace and will create the risk of destabilization in the Balkans and other regions.

### **Taiwan**

China reiterated that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory and that it will not permit any challenge to the one China principle and the General Assembly Resolution 2758. It also expressed its hope that 'concerned countries will not let themselves to be manipulated by the Taiwan authorities and stop making erroneous moves'. If efforts towards Taiwan's independence remain unchecked, so China, it would 'gravely endanger peace and stability across the Taiwan straits'.