



Remarks

by

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and “Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations”

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Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

Many of you will recall my statement of June 14 when I observed the need for any organization to change or adapt or it will simply lose its relevance, Today's agenda item, "Revitalization of the work of our General Assembly" provides us with an opportunity to examine the work of this body and seek ways in which we can collectively strengthen it so as to make it absolutely relevant to the entire UN system. It is an opportunity that should not be missed.

At the outset, I would like to acknowledge with appreciation all of the work which has taken place to date, as reflected most recently in resolution 67/297 of 29 August 2013 and the related report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on GA revitalization at the 67th session contained in document A/67/936. In this regard, I would like to commend Ambassador Mootaz Ahmadein Khalil of Egypt for his dedicated service during the previous session.

Excellencies,

As communicated in a letter dated 14 November 2013, I have appointed Ambassadors Frantisek Ružička and Norachit Sinhaseni as the Co-chairs for this session's consultations on this important agenda item. And as they begin their work at the conclusion of our consideration here today, I encourage each of you to be open, transparent and most of all, efficient, and I ask you to fully support them so as to ensure an ambitious outcome.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

General Assembly Resolution 67/297 gives members of the Working Group a number of specific mandates, ranging from the role of the General Assembly and its authority to

working methods and the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other executive heads to strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

While we have already begun to see significant changes in place, non-implementation of resolutions of the General Assembly, including those related to the revitalization of its work, continues to be a matter of concern for Member States, who have an important role and responsibility to play in this respect. I have every confidence in the commitment of the two presiding officers during the 68th session that the debate in the Ad Hoc Working Group will be approached in a thoughtful, investigative spirit, mindful that the very relevance of our Assembly depends upon it.

As for the Presidency of the Assembly, resolution 67/297 also assigns specific responsibilities. I assure you that I am mindful of them, and that I intend to fully comply with them both in letter and in spirit. You may already have noticed my zeal in regards to the use of our time, the relationship with the General Committee, and interactions with the Presidents of other major organs, to name but a few.

Excellencies,

The issue of “Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly” has long been before this body. While some would say that progress has not been fast enough, we - here in this room - know the General Assembly is at the very heart of the United Nations – what it stands for and what it was created to do. With this in mind, I hope you will allow me a moment to extol some of its virtues.

This body’s preeminent place among international policy fora is perhaps best demonstrated by the annual general debate and the high-level participation by Member States – this year, we have heard more than 110 Heads of State and Government. No other body on this planet attracts the same level of representation, or benefits from such legitimacy.

We can also look to the concrete achievements we have already seen during this 68th session. To name a few - the passing of a resolution on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council; the inauguration of the High Level Political Forum; the first High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament; and an outcome document that sets us on a path to create a universal and shared sustainable development agenda post-2015.

From a broader perspective, this General Assembly takes on the issues that affect us all. It ties us together with the thread of universality. The issues before us so often affect our Member States: both big and small, developing and developed, North and South. And the scope of what we cover is enormously comprehensive and far-reaching – from peace and security, sustainable development, economic and social development, human rights, humanitarian assistance to international law, organized crime and terrorism, among others.

When we come together to adopt a resolution – such as the Millennium Declaration – the work of the General Assembly not only carries moral weight, it has the power to influence the course of global and national policies; effectively, it changes the world. Such an opportunity is before us once again with the mapping of the post-2015 development agenda.

It is with this in mind that I have announced the convening of three high-level thematic debates and three high-level meetings on a diverse range of issues of immediate relevance and direct importance to setting the stage for the post-2015 development agenda. In this regard, I am pleased to inform you that I will be formally communicating to Member States the 2014 timetable for these meetings and debates in the next few days.

As we move forward, let us remain mindful that our true goal is not just to change the General Assembly; it is to change the world we live in. But we must begin right here – today – with the work that is before us and in fulfilling the commitments we have already made.

Thank you.
