



# BELGIUM

59th General Assembly of the United Nations -

September 24th 2004

SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS  
OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

H.E. Mr. KAREL DE GUCHT

*Check against delivery*

Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations Organisation  
823 U.N. Plaza, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 345 East 46th Street, New York, NY 10017  
Tel. 378-6300, Fax 681-7618  
E-mail [belgium@un.int](mailto:belgium@un.int) website <http://www.int/belgium>

Mister President,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Belgium's international commitment is rooted in the conviction that only **dialogue** and **cooperation** can push the initiatives taken at the international level forward. The careful building process of the European Union taught us that.

That is why Belgium firmly believes in the virtues of multilateralism.

By standing together, we are stronger.

By standing together, we benefit from more legitimacy, and thus from more opportunities of making our voices heard.

Mister President,

The challenges facing the United Nations have the merit of being clear.

As the Secretary General mentioned, the options that become available to the world will depend on the answers that we provide.

The credibility of the United Nations will continue to be judged by the organization's efficiency and by its results on the ground. We must therefore seek to reinforce the United Nations system.

We fully support the Secretary General's efforts in this difficult task. At the same time, we believe that the United Nations should better reflect today's new international realities.

Mister President,

In order to find a final solution to the crisis in the **Great Lakes Region**, we need the United Nations' sustained commitment.

The conflict has already cost millions of lives. We must react. Inaction would mean being guilty of neglect.

While I am not underestimating the difficulties encountered on the ground, I am convinced that a solution can be found. I thus refuse to believe that the stabilization process is doomed to deadlock or failure.

But in order to reach a solution, the International Community must prove that it can make a difference. In this regard, it is encouraging to see how dedicated the Secretary General is to this mission.

For its part, Belgium will continue to appeal to its European partners for a collective and committed involvement in the region.

Mister President,

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, it is essential that peace and security be guaranteed.

It is clear that the Transition process must be successful. The International Community cannot emphasize enough the duty that political leaders have to make it succeed.

Indeed, there are no alternatives to this process for obtaining peace and development in the region.

The reconstruction of a Nation is impossible as long as impunity and insecurity continue to reign.

The restructuring and the integration of the army are an indispensable prerequisite. Likewise, the demobilization and the reinsertion of the armed groups are crucial. Accordingly, Belgium is currently training close to 300 Congolese soldiers, as part of the "Train the Trainers" program.

It is equally essential for the committee of countries supervising the transition process to assume their responsibilities fully. For its part, Belgium is committed to participating actively in the implementation of the declaration adopted by the CIAT members.

The United Nations troops in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUC, play a crucial role and Belgium attaches great importance to them.

It is not only the credibility of the United Nations that is at stake here, but also and more importantly the future of an entire region. Belgium is therefore in favor of focusing the mandate of MONUC, as well as of strengthening its means.

We are also examining with our European partners what would be the most adequate common contribution to this mission.

It goes without saying that the elections foreseen in 2005 will be crucial. They will require substantial human and financial means, to which Belgium has already decided it will contribute.

Mister President,

In view of the situation in **Rwanda**, we offer our full support to the laudable efforts made towards reconciliation.

Normalized relations between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are absolutely indispensable and must be based on collaboration and good neighborly relations. This implies the mutual respect of the borders.

In many regards, the latest developments in **Burundi** are encouraging.

A constitution has been adopted, a referendum has been announced and the Commission in charge of supervising the elections is already in place.

Naturally, these elections are essential, which is why Belgium has provided significant financial backing to their organization.

I also urge the International Community to specify without delay what means it is ready to mobilize to this effect.

Mister President,

Belgium shares the concerns about the humanitarian crisis in **Darfur**.

There is no excuse for the persecution and the systematic massacre of thousands of human beings.

In light of such suffering, the efforts and the progress made thus far remain insufficient. Belgium thus insists on the swift establishment of an international investigations commission.

Mister President,

The situation in **Iraq** will continue to present a considerable challenge over the coming months and even years.

I congratulate the United Nations for its continued support to the Iraqi transition process, especially given the country's climate of insecurity.

The population of Iraq, which has already faced so many ordeals, must finally be able to live in peace.

It is of course the Iraqi people who must shoulder the responsibility of guiding the political process. A process that must lead to the creation of a new parliament, a new

constitution and a sovereign government. A government that must be capable of ensuring the well being of its citizens, as well as its security, without having to rely on external assistance.

Belgium has already allocated 17 million Euros to the reconstruction process. And we will ensure the air transportation of the UNAMI personnel between Amman and Baghdad.

Mister President,

The **proliferation** of weapons of mass destruction poses a serious threat to world security.

The regime of non-proliferation is jeopardized.

North Korea must regain its place within this regime without delay.

The Islamic Republic of **Iran** is located in a region full of tension and its security concerns are legitimate. The International Community should take this into account.

On their part, the Iranian Authorities must cooperate entirely with the AIEA and cease all activities linked to the enrichment of uranium.

Iran will thus contribute significantly to the stabilization and the prosperity of the region.

Mister President,

The tragedy in Beslan has proved once again that **terrorism** attacks blindly.

It goes without saying that no act of terrorism is justifiable. The indignation and the analysis that such acts may provoke can in no way vary according to the victim, the location, the aggressor or the circumstance.

Adequate military means and security measures will remain necessary in order to fight terrorism. But tackling it head-on will require other means than strictly military ones.

Indeed, the favorable environment in which terrorism thrives comprises economic, political and ideological dimensions.

That is why I plead for a genuine dialogue between the West and the Muslim and Arab world, not only between the political leaders but also with the spiritual leaders.

Not as a *mere* exchange of ideas or points of view, but as an honest quest to identify the means that can deny terrorism all legitimacy and all "raison d'être."

In order to finally put an end to this horrifying chain reaction of destruction and death.

Thank you, Mister President.