



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

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59TH SESSION

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

GENERAL DEBATE

New York, 23 September 2004

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Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President I would like to begin by congratulating you upon your election to this challenging office. Under your able guidance, this assembly will take forward its relentless pursuit for peace, security and prosperity throughout the world. I can assure you of Greece's unwavering support in your efforts.

Many thanks to the outgoing president, Mr. Julian Hunte for his exemplary efforts and achievements in revitalizing the work of the General Assembly as well as on many other issues.

The Greek Government fully subscribes to the statement delivered earlier by the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union as well as to the EU Priorities presented to this General Assembly.

Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the beginning of the 21st century events of great importance changed the world we live in.

From the most shocking tragedy of September 11th to the bombing attacks in Madrid and the recent acts of unspeakable brutality in Beslan, a dark parade of acts of blind violence has caused immense human suffering. This has increased our responsibility and cemented our will to work in solidarity for a safer and fair world. Fighting international terrorism has become the most pressing task among our priorities.

In this fight, we must prevail. Besides the scourge of terrorism, however, there are many more challenges and grave problems that afflict humanity. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, human trafficking, organized crime, failing states, environmental catastrophes, social and economic crises, pandemics, large scale humanitarian disasters, hunger and poverty, constitute the core problems we have to face in solidarity regardless of geography, culture or religion.

Last year the Secretary-General announced the creation of the High Level Panel of eminent persons to assess these new threats and challenges and to suggest ways to deal with them, including through reform of the multilateral international system. We fully support these efforts. We are eager to

contribute constructively, to the best of our abilities, towards making the United Nations as effective as possible for the 21st Century.

Monsieur le Président,

Les grands défis et les menaces auxquels nous sommes confrontés sont une source de profonde inquiétude tant pour nous que pour les peuples que nous représentons. Cependant, j'ai la conviction qu'il faut éviter à tout prix se laisser entraîner dans une atmosphère de pessimisme et d'angoisse pour ce qui concerne l'avenir.

Quant à moi, je partage avec des millions de gens de par le monde, l'espoir, l'optimisme et la détermination qui ont été récemment mis en lumière durant les Jeux Olympiques et Paralympiques d'Athènes.

A Athènes, les athlètes du monde ont dédié leurs efforts à une noble cause et nous ont démontré que compétition ne signifie pas nécessairement tension, friction, crise ou conflit. Bien au contraire, ils ont prouvé que les aspirations des uns et des autres peuvent non seulement coexister pacifiquement mais aussi conduire au renforcement de l'amitié, de la solidarité et de la coopération parmi les individus et les nations.

L'idéal ancien de la trêve Olympique incarne l'espoir de l'homme moderne pour le règlement pacifique des conflits qui ravagent le monde. L'Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies a à maintes reprises, et d'une façon unanime entériné la Trêve Olympique, et elle a aussi appelé les Etats membres à la respecter durant les Jeux. Il s'agit à présent de transformer cet appel en réalité tangible.

Dear Colleagues

Multilateral cooperation is the safest way to a better world. We all should contribute to the enhancement and effectiveness of the international multilateral system. In this context, Greece fully shares the view of the Secretary General that we have to move rapidly from the existing culture of reaction to that of prevention.

To my country the peaceful resolution of all disputes at any early stage on the basis of the UN Charter is of fundamental importance. We strongly believe that the United Nations system of conflict prevention and its preventive potential should be further enhanced to respond better to the

challenges ahead. The General Assembly's Resolution 57/337(2003) contains important recommendations in this regard.

Moreover, Greece firmly supports and participates to all disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives aiming at the development of a safer world free of threats from all kinds of weapons, either conventional or weapons of mass destruction.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Peace and development are two mutually reinforcing sides of the same coin. Persisting poverty cheats nations out of progress and provides breeding ground for both internal and regional crises.

Four years ago a landmark decision was taken to embark upon a long term global evolution by adopting the Millennium Declaration. We committed ourselves to achieve the goals set by the year 2015. It would be a disgrace to mankind if we don't succeed to bring stable and sustainable development and eradicate hunger and poverty.

However, there are growing indications that despite some progress, we are lagging in fulfilling targets agreed upon. We have to explore collectively new innovative ways of financing development. Particular attention should be paid to the development problems of Africa and of the Small Island States.

In line with the Millennium Declaration, and despite the enormous outlay of resources necessary to finance the Olympic Games and their security, Greece has made a point to increase its development assistance.

In the context of this effort, Greece welcomes the proposals to combat hunger and poverty by the president of Brazil, co-sponsored by France, Chile, Argentine and Spain. We shall continue to work towards a constructive and effective system that will allow smooth cooperation between recipients and donors, between developing and developed countries.

Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A close look in Greece's immediate neighborhood reveals that despite considerable progress made over the last few years, the situation still remains fragile in parts of the western Balkans. Unemployment and the lack of economic perspective are in some cases a social and political time bomb. The situation in Kosovo remains a source of instability.

With the proactive support and involvement of the international community we are working hard to transform the Balkans in a region of democracy, peace, stability and prosperity, focused on a common European future. We believe that genuinely regional initiatives such as the Southeastern European Cooperation Process constitute the appropriate vehicle to enable the participating countries to coordinate their efforts towards reform, progress and good neighborliness.

In recent years, the climate of our bilateral relations with Turkey has been constantly improving. Both the Greek and the Turkish Governments have undertaken sincere efforts to set bilateral relations on a new track. We note with satisfaction the progress achieved so far in certain areas of our bilateral cooperation and express our determination to expand it further. It is in this spirit that we clearly support Turkey's European perspective.

In Cyprus, reunification remains our unwavering goal through a mutually agreed lasting, fair and functional settlement, based on the relevant Security Council Resolutions and the UNSG's plan and compatible with the acquis communautaire and the EU principles.

During the last thirty years of military occupation of more than 1/3 of the territory of Cyprus, Greece has strongly supported every attempt and initiative by the UN, including the last one, for the achievement of a just, viable, and functional solution of the Cyprus problem. Unfortunately, this last round of talks did not lead to an agreed comprehensive solution. In the referendum, which followed in last April, the overwhelming majority of the Greek Cypriots rejected a specific version of the Annan Plan, but they still deeply cherish the goal of a reunited Island.

The international community can contribute decisively in this direction by keeping "the window for a solution" open and avoid any action which could

lead to the deepening of a division of the island or could fail to provide incentives for its reunification. Greece has firmly supported efforts to encourage the Turkish – Cypriot community's economic development which could facilitate reunification in the context of Cyprus – EU membership. At the same time, we believe that the international community should reserve itself before taking any initiative that emphasizes the division of the island, let alone any measure leading directly or indirectly to economic and political secessionism.

The horizon over the Middle East remains dark. The Greek Government is convinced that only the implementation of the Road Map can lead to the two state solution, that is Israel and Palestine, coexisting in peace and security. Half measures could only complicate matters and add new sources of tension.

Essential progress in the peace process cannot be achieved without a comprehensive cessation of all kinds of violence, especially those directed against civilians. Terrorism cannot be a weapon to achieve political goals and terrorist attacks cannot be justified by any means.

As to Iraq, we are deeply committed to the territorial integrity and unity of the country in a federal system. We are deeply worried by the ongoing violence and we hope for progress in the political process which will lead to a stable and prosperous democratic country allowing all of its citizens to enjoy the fruits of peace and exploit the country's enormous potential.

Monsieur le Président,

Face aux grands défis du continent africain, nous prenons note, avec grande satisfaction, du zèle démontré et des résultats acquis par l'Union Africaine, une organisation qui ne date pourtant que de trois ans.

La Grèce, ainsi que ses partenaires Européens, a la volonté de contribuer à l'amélioration des perspectives africaines moyennant l'assistance au développement, l'assistance humanitaire et logistique. Nous soutenons de plus la perspective d'une coopération politique renforcée avec les pays Africains et les Organisations régionales du continent.

Je saisis cette occasion pour exprimer les félicitations de mon gouvernement et du peuple grec pour le 10ème anniversaire de l'établissement de la

démocratie en République Sud-Africaine, un événement historique à portée panafricaine.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My country has applied for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the period of 2005 – 2006. I wish to express our deep appreciation to the members of the Western European and others Group for their endorsement. Elections are taking place in a few weeks time. We are asking for the support of the Assembly and we will greatly appreciate it. May I assure you that we shall respect its mandate and remain strongly committed to contribute constructively to the maintenance of peace and security and the preservation of the multilateral order.

Let me assure you Mr. President, that Greece remains completely devoted to the promotion of democratic principles of government, peaceful resolution of disputes, strict adherence to international law and respect for human rights.

Should we be elected, we are determined to devote all our efforts and our capacity in fulfilling this responsibility and honor the trust of this assembly of all nations.

Thank you