



SLOVENIA

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Address by

H.E. Dr. JANEZ DRNOVŠEK
the President of the Republic of Slovenia

**AT THE FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

GENERAL DEBATE

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PERMANENT MISSION OF SLOVENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Mr. President,
Heads of State and Government,
Mr. Secretary General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Through the founding of the United Nations Organisation almost sixty years ago, humankind raised its mutual cooperation to an entirely new level. Prior to that, humankind came to realise painfully the inseparable linking of its fate and the urgent need for international cooperation through a catastrophe of unimaginable dimensions.

Today the fate of humankind is even more crucially linked than ever before. The boundaries between the problems of "others" and "our" problems are being increasingly erased. This applies to a wide range of areas: from security and social welfare to the economy and environment. For this reason world problems demand solidarity and the additional commitment of the international community to help those in need and to ensure that everyone will share in the fruits of technological progress. In this spirit Slovenia supports the report of the Committee for Social Aspects of Globalisation and its emphasis on the urgent need to ensure the conditions for just and fair globalisation.

The Millennium objectives represent a major commitment to resolving problems of the modern world. But the developmental goals for bridging the gap between rich and poor are not being realised to a satisfactory extent. Existing international mechanisms and institutions are not ensuring that the trends of increasing global imbalance can be turned around for the better. We need change that will break through the inertia of established systems of operation. And for this we need new approaches: Introducing innovative sources of financing world development can be one such approach. It is time for us to realise the urgent need for change in world relations, and to summon up the necessary will to put these changes into effect. And therefore to raise the level of international cooperation to a new level.

Mr. President,

The past year was again marked by international terrorism, which claimed countless innocent lives. We witnessed with pain the tragedies in Beslan, Moscow, Madrid, Istanbul, Riyadh, Haifa and elsewhere. International terrorism is erasing the boundary between peace and war. The common fight against international terrorism and its origins must remain one of the priority tasks of individual members and of the entire UN. This also applies to preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The unanimous Security Council resolution is a welcome step towards effective cooperation in this area.

When we combat the universal evil of terrorism, we should not do this at the expense of the existing legal standards of human rights and international humanitarian law. Any lowering of these standards will be repaid to us in a reduction of the legitimacy of international action — and consequently in creating fertile ground for further attacks on human security.

We should also draw attention to the responsibility of countries to ensure for their citizens in accordance with the principles of good government the conditions for a secure and decent life.

In this context we must express our concern at the humanitarian situation in Darfur, and we welcome the efforts of the UN and the international community to seek a way out of the crisis.

Mr. President,

The increasingly direct contacts between cultures and civilisations bring new challenges and new opportunities. Let us exploit them for mutual enrichment and the formulation of a common consciousness of humankind. We will be able to do that only with the presumption of radical equality and the tolerant acceptance of plurality in human values. The boundaries of the plurality of these values are delineated by fundamental human rights and freedoms. The UN plays a central part in asserting them internationally. Slovenia welcomes the start of work by the new High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, and assures her of our full willingness to cooperate. At the same time we express our continued support of the International Criminal Court that represents an important instrument for exercising the rule of law and human rights.

Only a multilateral response to the modern challenges can be effective. Of all the existing organisations, the United Nations is without doubt the most important and most appropriate for seeking such responses. However, it is in need of institutional reform, so that the structure of 60 years ago can now better reflect the realities of today's world. Solutions to the burning issues of humankind must be sought within the UN system, since otherwise solutions will be imposed outside it. Frequently this will be without doubt to the detriment of human development.

Slovenia supports the efforts to revitalise the General Assembly, and expresses its acknowledgement to Julian Hunte, president of the 58th session of the General Assembly, of his achievements in this area. We await eagerly the report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change at the end of the year, and express our willingness for full cooperation. We hope that on the 60th anniversary of the organisation we will be able to confirm such changes that will ensure for the global organisation a central place and the greatest effectiveness possible in performing its mission.

Mr. President,

The threat to international peace and security is increasingly taking on new forms, which for a long time now have not been limited to the danger of aggression by one country against another. They cover a whole range of internal tensions and conflicts within countries on the one hand, and transboundary threats of international terrorism, environmental pollution and asymmetrical effects of globalisation on the other. In the modern threats to international peace and security, the players are not merely states. So for this reason alone, states cannot provide on their own a satisfactory response to them.

Intergovernmental cooperation needs to be supplemented through the inclusion of various non-governmental organisations and of the global civil society. I would also like to highlight the responsibility and potential of transnational corporations to contribute to protecting the environment and to eliminating the tensions caused by global competitive models. Non-governmental organisations can contribute to solutions through innovative approaches, and by

going beyond the limitations of established bureaucratic frameworks. They can help to create the critical mass of awareness regarding the urgent need for change and removal of global imbalances. By incorporating the contribution of various sections of world society into the work of the UN, we will make it more sensitive to the actual problems of people in different parts of the world. In this context we welcome the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, since it sets out a range of useful proposals regarding the contribution of non-governmental actors.

Mr. President,

The complexity of modern threats to world peace and security also demand a strengthening of cooperation between various regional organisations and the UN. Here we welcome open debate in the Security Council on this subject. This cooperation is especially welcome where regional intervention can prove to be more rapid and more effective in conflict prevention and in post-conflict peace building. Next year Slovenia will assume the presidency of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and in this capacity too we will strive for a further intensification of the good cooperation between the two organisations.

In this spirit the European Union is assuming increasing responsibility for stabilisation and progress in the countries of South Eastern Europe. In the past year we witnessed major progress by some of the countries in the region. At the same time in some places we saw a resurgence of dangers that are created by still unresolved inter-ethnic issues and a lack of socio-economic prospects. Attaining democratic standards, including human rights and the protection of minorities, must remain at the centre of our efforts. At the same time, however, we have to note that some unresolved status questions curb the political and economic consolidation of the region. Thus we will have to devote more attention to resolving these questions.

Mr. President,

Globalisation is erasing geographical boundaries and reducing the physical distances between people. At the same time, however, it is increasing the differences between rich and poor, between those that are sharing in the positive effects of globalisation and those that are being pushed even further to the margins. Frequently we forget that not even those who derive the greatest benefit from globalisation can protect themselves from its negative effects. Not even the richest and most technically advanced of us can isolate ourselves from international terrorism, from the effects of climate change and extreme poverty. For this reason our common commitment and responsibility must be to ensure that the positive effects of globalisation will be attained by all people; and that through our combined powers we will ensure the protection of nature. And we shall only achieve this through the broadest partnership and solidarity. There are more than enough signals that it is now high time for coordinated international action.

Thank you.