



PERMANENT MISSION OF TURKEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

ADDRESS BY

HIS EXCELLENCY

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DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

AT THE 59TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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**Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to start by congratulating you on your election as President of the 59th General Assembly. I pledge the full support of my delegation in your endeavors. I would also like to pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Julian Hunte for his able Presidency.

Mr. President,

We are a generation of world leaders at a time when our globe is undergoing an important phase of adaptation to new realities, opportunities and challenges.

As the Secretary-General, H. E. Mr. Kofi Annan frequently states, we now possess the know-how to address our common concerns. The Millennium Summit, which was the largest gathering of the world leaders, produced a historic document: the Millennium Declaration which charts the right course for humanity in the new Millennium.

The goals that the Millennium Declaration defined for humanity are ambitious, yet achievable. Reducing hunger and extreme poverty, spreading universal primary education, halting infectious diseases, and reducing child mortality within 15 years continue to be urgent tasks.

Universal humanitarian challenges and chronic political-military conflicts are compounded with new and asymmetrical threats: Threats such as terrorism, narcotics, organized crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and environmental problems. Racism, anti-Semitism, prejudicial attitudes against the tenants of certain creeds and cultures, among them the Muslims, and xenophobia add fuel to those menaces. Besides, special and urgent needs of the African continent remain to be responded collectively.

The UN system should be encouraged to elevate its role in addressing these issues. Faith in international order and institutions should not be undermined. A more effective and credible United Nations would be more capable of facing the common challenges of today. The UN Security Council should have a more representative and balanced character. Representation at the Council has to be inclusive and fair. This will increase its legitimacy and efficiency. In this respect, I would like to commend the efforts of the Secretary-General.

Mr. President,

Correlation between good governance and peace and prosperity is valid both at home and in the world. Therefore, a global agenda for reform should cover all aspects of our domestic and international life. Each member of the international community has a stake and responsibility in implementing such an agenda.

On our part, fully conscious of this correlation, my government has realized sweeping political and economic reforms in the last two years. We, thus, upgraded and deepened our democracy. An accountable, transparent and efficient administration and a dynamic civil society upholding the rule of law and human rights have been consolidated. Expectations of our people as well as the relevant United Nations and European Union standards inspired us in our reform drive. I take pride in seeing that many, both in the west and the east, have observed in our experience a perfect embodiment of modernity, progress, identity and tradition.

Mr. President,

I should like to take this opportunity to confirm Turkey's candidacy for a non-permanent seat at the Security Council for the term 2009-2010. In spite of her substantial contributions to peace and security, Turkey has not been a member of the Council for almost half a century. Therefore, we rightfully expect the support of the General Assembly for our candidacy.

Our bid for the non-permanent seat is in tune with Turkey's larger efforts to secure peace, stability and security in its region and beyond. Turkey figures as a prominent country in humanitarian activities from Palestine to Darfur. Our contribution has been made available in increasing numbers for international peace keeping missions in a wide geography from Bosnia to Afghanistan.

Turkey has a unique position as the only member of the Organization of Islamic Conference that is also a candidate to the European Union. This position enables us to facilitate interaction and dialogue between the Islamic World and the West.

Turkey's achievements in helping create an environment in our region and beyond that is conducive to development, stability and progress are plenty. The Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Economic Cooperation Organization, Stability Pact are good examples to that effect.

Mr. President,

My Government has been pursuing a peaceful and problem-solving policy to world affairs.

On the chronic issue of Cyprus, my government placed its full support behind the Secretary General Kofi Annan's good offices mission. We cooperated closely with him. The Secretary General's settlement plan was the result of four years of serious negotiations between the two sides. They were conducted on the basis of a new bi-zonal partnership with a federal government and two constituent states. The Plan was put to separate referendum with the prior agreement of all parties concerned. The Annan Plan was overwhelmingly accepted by the Turkish Cypriots whereas the Greek Cypriot leadership chose to reject it.

I profoundly regret that the opportunity to solve the long standing problem of Cyprus was thus missed. As a result, a chance to grant fresh credibility to the United Nations was lost. A possible source of inspiration for peace-makers elsewhere, in the Middle East or the Caucasus, also disappeared.

The Secretary General in his report to the Security Council clearly stated that the referenda drastically changed the situation in the Island. It confirmed, once again, the existence of two equal peoples and their separate rights to decide for their fate.

The Secretary General also called on the members of the Security Council, I quote, "to give a strong lead to all States to cooperate both bilaterally and in international bodies to eliminate unnecessary restrictions and barriers that have the effect of isolating the Turkish Cypriots and impeding their development", end of quote.

Turkey remains committed to a lasting settlement in Cyprus. Five months have passed since the Turkish Cypriots, responding to the calls of the international community, voted courageously in favor of the UN Plan. However, they are yet to be rewarded for expressing their will for the reunification of the Island. We urge the Security Council to positively respond to the Secretary General's calls. We also appeal to UN member states to take, at bilateral level, concrete steps to put an end to the isolation and punishment of the people of the Turkish, Republic of Northern Cyprus.

Mr. President,

Turkey has and will continue its strong support for the preservation of peace and stability in Southeast Europe.

We are glad to note considerable progress in this region thanks to the sustained efforts of the international community and the Balkan countries themselves.

Turkey is determined to sustain the promising and constructive atmosphere in our relations with Greece. We hope that the improvement in bilateral relations will continue in the coming period. Our wide ranging cooperation is expanding in every field. This will facilitate the settlement of all pending issues. It will also result in a climate of cooperation beneficial to the two countries as well as peace, stability and security in the region as a whole.

Turkey believes that it is high time to start taking concrete steps to eliminate the existing frozen conflicts in Southern Caucasus such as Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. As a neighboring country, we actively contribute to efforts aimed at achieving stability and prosperity in this region. To this end, we have been encouraging all the parties concerned while facilitating the ongoing process of dialogue.

We hope that the Abkhazian conflict and the problems in South Ossetia are overcome by peaceful means, within the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia.

My Government supports a just and lasting solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the fundamental principles of international law, the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and good neighborly relations. We expect the Armenian Government to fully comply with the relevant UN resolutions to reach such a solution.

Mr. President

The Middle East problem and the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan stand as the major conflicts compounding instability in the world and leading to increasingly serious consequences.

The Road Map is the only available framework for a comprehensive settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian problem. Benefiting from her traditional ties with the parties, Turkey has already offered its active contribution to the implementation of the Road Map. We also support every effort that is initiated and coordinated in this context. We join the call made by the Quartet yesterday.

The resumption of the negotiating process between the two parties should remain the central objective of the current efforts. Likewise, fulfilling the performance criteria by both sides as laid out in the Road Map is important. Terrorist attacks against the Israeli people must stop. So must the deliberate destruction of Palestinian lives and properties. The reform process of the Palestinian institutions must be advanced. Israeli settlement activities must be immediately halted. The ruling of the International Court of Justice must be respected. The living conditions of the Palestinians need to be urgently improved.

Any settlement would not be complete without progress in all the tracks including the Syrian and the Lebanese ones.

Mr. President,

My Government is focused on contributing to improvement of the situation in Iraq. We appreciate the massive resources and political efforts mobilized by the US Administration and the international community for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Iraq. We sincerely wish these efforts to yield the desired results soon.

However, humanitarian, political and security difficulties faced by the people of Iraq continue to adversely affect each other. It goes without saying that developments in Iraq are also affecting my country and causing suffering for my people while most of Iraq's humanitarian needs are being supplied through Turkey as a neighboring country.

The Iraqi transition is not only about the fate of the Iraqi nation. It is about the future of peace and prosperity in the whole region and beyond. This is the motive of Turkey's strong support of a united, territorially intact and democratic Iraq: An Iraq that is in peace with itself and with its neighbors. This should and can only be achieved with the full participation and support of the Iraqi people as a whole. More UN involvement would

facilitate this task. The Neighboring Countries Meetings, initiated by Turkey, is also a most valuable instrument to be taken into account. After all, Iraq's success will be our collective success, and so will be its failure.

Turkey, will continue to support the Iraqi interim government's efforts in paving the way to normalcy and democracy.

The traditional support of Turkey towards the Afghan people will continue. The establishment of security, stability and a democratic system in Afghanistan is another urgent task. Making this country free from terrorism, extremism and narcotics is of crucial importance for the international community. We should all work for the incoming elections to constitute a significant step to these ends.

Mr. President,

We all agree that terrorism has no justification. It can never claim to represent any religion, nation or cause. Indiscriminate killing of innocent people, be it in New York, in Istanbul, in Baghdad, in Beslan or elsewhere, is a crime against humanity. We condemn these terrorist atrocities in the strongest terms.

As a country that long suffered from terrorism, Turkey calls for more intensified multilateral cooperation. The United Nations system is an important platform in this respect and we extend our full support to efforts under this roof.

We also strongly believe in the urgent need to strengthen the control regimes on weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. We will continue to support the ongoing work to ensure full adherence to the legal instruments in this field. The creation of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones is an important way of strengthening peace and security in the world and in all regions, including the Middle East.

Mr. President,

Turkey is determined to deploy every effort aimed at strengthening peace and stability in its immediate region and beyond. We will try to make use of our multi-dimensional ties and deep-seated relations to achieve this goal. We remain strongly committed to translating into reality the universal validity of the noble values and principles written in the United Nations Charter.

Thank you for your attention.