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**THE PERMANENT MISSION
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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STATEMENT

**by His Excellency
Mr. Rashid MEREDOV**

**Deputy Prime Minister,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan**

**in the General Debate
of the 59th session of the United Nations General
Assembly**

New York, 27 September 2004

Mr. President,
Distinguished heads of delegations,
Ladies and gentlemen

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the honor to speak from this high rostrum and convey on behalf of the President of Turkmenistan, Saparmurat Niyazov, the best wishes of peace and prosperity to the peoples of all nations.

Allow me to congratulate our distinguished President upon the election to this high and responsible post and wish him to successfully steer the work of the 59th session of the General Assembly.

Events taking place in the world and influencing the development of each region and each country serve as a proof of dramatic change of the meaning of historical process in the new reality. Maintaining security and stability in the world will depend to the large extent on our ability to elaborate and implement qualitatively new approaches of interaction within the Community of Nations.

In these conditions, the unchanged principle and basic direction of our foreign policy has been and remains to strengthen and develop close cooperation with the United Nations. Taking this opportunity I would like to thank the leadership of the United Nations, its Secretary-General Kofi Annan for constant support of the peace-loving foreign policy of Turkmenistan.

It should be noted that one of the priority areas of our cooperation with the United Nations is the area of maintenance of international peace and security, prevention of confrontation and conflict resolution by political means and methods. On these issues, Turkmenistan was on a numerous occasions a center where effective negotiations under the aegis of the United Nations and with the participation of its specialized agencies were held on complex situations that happened in our region.

During current General Debate it was numerously noted that terrorism poses a major threat to the international security and stability.

After the events of September 11, 2001 Turkmenistan was one of the first countries to support the United Nations initiative on building international coalition to fight terrorism and has become its active participant.

In this context Turkmenistan not only decisively denounces any acts of terrorism in any part of the world but also undertakes specific legislative and practical measures aimed at fighting this evil and preventing it from spreading.

It is especially relevant if one to understand that the security conditions of the world community are formulated by the real contribution of every nation to the strengthening of its internal stability on par with cooperation at a collective level.

That's why we believe that in modern conditions it is necessary to elaborate qualitatively new dimension in interaction between States and in the framework of their joint activities in the international organizations.

Despite the various ways of manifestations of terrorism, its nature is the same and at its root it has doctrinarian egoism raised by its adherents to the extreme levels of evil, intolerance and cruelty. Terrorism does not recognize States, nationalities, it has no religious or cultural affiliation. That is why fighting terrorism and terrorists should be a collective effort.

It is exactly the close coordination of actions of word community members on the basis of norms of international law that it is possible to define the creation of such atmosphere in the world where any manifestation of terrorism would not go unpunished and also give possibility to take effective measures to fight with it.

In this connection Turkmenistan stands for effective implementation of complex system of measures to fight terrorism including active cooperation of states in searching and bringing to responsibility organizers and perpetrators of terrorist acts.

To counteract international terrorism, defend rights and freedoms of our own citizens we have to be able to foresee each its manifestation and oppose it not only with our unanimous condemnation but also with high professionalism of law enforcement agencies as well as active use of all international legal instruments created within the UN framework.

Mr. President

Making the role of the United Nations more relevant becomes even more evident against the background of modern development of both global and regional processes where concentration of collective efforts and adoption of decisions taking into account differing interests is required.

In this regard basic principles of international cooperation enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and tested over time criteria for maintaining balance of interests are of priority to us. Following such a course Turkmenistan always strives to fully utilize the potential of the Community of Nations and its institutions in proposing and advancing its foreign policy initiatives.

We see huge possibilities in close partnership with the UN and its specialized agencies in realizations of joint programs and projects. In this context we express gratitude to such United Nations specialized agencies as UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNODC, UNFPA for cooperation with us.

In cooperation with these agencies the Government of Turkmenistan implements a number of large projects which produce specific results in social sphere, in healthcare, education, environment, illegal drug trafficking and various other areas.

Turkmenistan will continue to maintain close ties with these agencies in search and implementation of new possibilities for cooperation.

The signing by the Government of Turkmenistan in February of this year of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2005-2009 (UNDAF) was a clear demonstration of strategic cooperation of Turkmenistan and the United Nations system. The significant mark of the signed document is the fact that this Program is being aimed at resolving global tasks within the framework of Millennium Development Goals, adopted by the United Nations, fully coincides with the national priorities and interests of Turkmenistan that are set forth in the National Development Strategy of Turkmenistan for the period until 2020.

One of the important components of the political course undertaken by Turkmenistan is the human dimension. In this area our country carries out joint work with international organizations.

During the years of independence we have carried out work to create real guarantees of enjoyment of personal, political, economic, social and other rights of citizens. For example, in the area of personal rights this is reflected in the laws and law enforcement practice of Turkmenistan regarding the abolition of death penalty, prohibition of carrying out searches in the homes of citizens, ban on taking individual decision in opening criminal case and other documents. Turkmenistan confirms implementation of these legal acts by its practical actions.

Every year by the decree of the President we carry out widespread pardoning of prisoners, the next one is to take place in about one month and as a result of it over 9 thousand people will be amnestied.

In today's Turkmenistan there are no restrictions on travel of its citizens abroad, there is guaranteed freedom of registration and activity of religious organizations and groups in accordance with universally recognized norms irrespective of the number of adherents or faith. A number of important legislative acts on these issues were adopted and in accordance with them at present several confessions are registered and functioning in Turkmenistan.

In the field of human dimension Turkmenistan has intensified its work with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. At the invitation of the Government of Turkmenistan in March of 2004 Turkmenistan was visited by the group of experts of the OHCHR which jointly

with the Turkmen side has worked out a specific areas of cooperation and rendered support in further development of human dimension issue including methodological and legal assistance in preparing national reports on United Nations conventions in the field of human rights. We intend to continue our efforts on these issues and ready to cooperate with all structures of the UN and other international organizations.

Against the background of such effective interaction we are concerned about the fact that in the Third Committee last year a resolution on human rights situation in Turkmenistan was considered.

This was happening in the circumstances where representatives of a few countries that initiated this question, without having visited Turkmenistan and having studied the situation on the ground, without taking into account significant initiatives of the Government of Turkmenistan in this area, have put forward this proposal even without familiarizing us with its content.

Such attempts of one-sided consideration of serious issues, to our opinion, are not acceptable and do not encourage constructive cooperation in this sphere, and adopting any hasty decisions does not bring positivism to a constructive dialog. It is very important, especially taking into account principle of respect for States which is one of the major one in the system of values professed at the United Nations.

Mr. President,

At the juncture of 20th and 21st centuries our region – Central Asia - has moved forward to the front line of the world attention. Prospects of the world and security on the global level would be determined in many respects on how multilateral dialogue on problems of this region would be constructed.

Realizing all responsibility before the world community Turkmenistan attaches utmost significance to the role of the UN in intensifying regional and interregional dialogue in seeking solutions for brewing problems. In this regard I should like to draw your attention to the initiative of the President of Turkmenistan Saparmurat Niyazov regarding creation of the central Asian regional consultative council of the Heads of State.

The question here is about creation of interstate body at the highest level for holding regular consultations and working-out joint decisions on topical issues that directly affect fate of the region's countries and real necessities of people that populate them.

First of all, it is the issues of cooperation in trade and economy, energy supply, border trade, transportation, humanitarian interaction. To our opinion, this mechanism of multilateral consultations of Heads of State would promote development and implementation of agreed actions of parties on the basis of mutual interest and would allow creating the most effective system of rational interaction.

In October of 2003 a Forum of conflict prevention and sustainable development for central Asia took place in Ashgabat under the aegis of the United Nations and OSCE. In the context of strengthening of effectiveness of the instruments of preventive diplomacy we consider it useful to create in the Central Asian region the United Nations Center on Preventive Diplomacy. Turkmenistan is ready to provide full assistance in locating it in the capital of our State.

The preparation of the trans-afghan gas pipeline project "Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan" has become an important stage of intensifying regional cooperation. Turkmenistan welcomes the interest in large companies and financial and industrial groups in this big project.

In this connection I should like to note that the United Nations using its high international authority could have worked-out a system of political and legal guarantees that ensure favorable conditions for realization of this project. Here we think it is important to draw the attentions of Member States to the fact that Turkmenistan has earlier proposed from this podium to elaborate and adopt under the UN aegis and international convention on the regime and guarantees of functioning of interstate pipeline. We believe that such document would allow creating a

dependable political and legal mechanism to ensure transportation of raw materials to the world markets.

Speaking of the problem of implementation of secure development strategy and cooperation in the region I would like to underline that the foreign policy course of neutrality pursued by Turkmenistan is aimed at exactly that objective.

This also concerns the exploration of the richest fields of hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian Sea basin. This issue is not only linked to the interests of the countries of the region but many States of the world and transnational companies. Our policy is aimed at combining these interests.

It is known that the oil and natural gas reserves of the Caspian Sea are the most important energy resources of the planet in the XXI century. Their reasonable and effective exploration, creation of relevant pipeline infrastructure to take them to the world markets would ensure significant economic growth of many States and well-being to their people.

Effective economic activity on the Caspian Sea is closely linked to ensuring stability in the Caspian region. Turkmenistan is for Caspian Sea to be the zone of peace, stability and sustainable international cooperation based on principles of justice and mutual respect.

Mr. President,

We share a common view that in the XXI century the United Nations system needs rational reform. We are for the reform of the United Nations but only towards its strengthening and broadening its role in the world.

In this context the issue of ensuring maximal representation of Member States in the United Nations, its specialized agencies and in the system in general is not of a small importance. Besides, the United Nations should to the fullest degree use those possibilities and advantages that the Member States have. For example, Turkmenistan is ready to provide to the UN agencies its resources for enlarging their presence in the region by opening in our capital of headquarters and other main offices of the United Nations agencies.

Diversity and complexity of tasks faced by the Member State of the United Nations is evident. Their solution lies not only at the level of collective efforts with necessary realization of individual role and responsibility of each country of the world community. It is this logic of political behavior that Turkmenistan adheres to. We aim at strengthening peace, economic, social and cultural development.

Thank you, Mr. President.