



# **BELGIUM**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Karel De Gucht,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of  
Belgium**

**At the 60th General Assembly of the  
Organisation of the United Nations**

**New York, 22 September 2005**

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Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations Organisation  
823 U.N. Plaza, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 345 East 46<sup>th</sup> 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,

Allow me to congratulate you warmly with your election as President of our Assembly. I would also like to thank your predecessor, Mr. Jean Ping, for the manner in which he conducted the preparations for the Summit of Heads of State and Government, which just took place. We are very grateful to him for turning this challenge into a success.

Mr President,  
Dear Colleagues,

Even though we had hoped for a more ambitious agreement, this Summit allowed us to give a new impulse and new strategic guidelines to our organization. We needed them. Only a stronger and more legitimate United Nations will be able to respond to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and to implement the collective security consensus that we endorsed in the Summit's outcome document.

Belgium is a strong advocate of efficient multilateralism, and I emphasize the word "efficient"; because this is not just a profession of faith. We need credible structures and strong institutions capable of implementing international commitments and common disciplines to which we subscribe. It is all too easy to conduct a declamatory policy. We have to turn our words into action. That is why, in this context, I am pleased with the progress made during the Summit.

I am particularly pleased with the adoption of the consensus, according to which security, peace, development and human rights are not only interlinked, but mutually reinforcing. This is a significant step forward in our efforts to build a more peaceful, more prosperous and more equitable world. This idea will guide our actions and will form the basis of our approach. Without peace, there is no development and human rights come under pressure. Without development and without respect for human rights, stability and security become elusive.

This link between development, stability and human rights becomes acutely apparent in fragile or failing states. These are often states devastated by conflict or civil war; states whose leaders are no longer capable to cater for the basic needs of their people. Often, their economic situation has dramatically deteriorated. Sometimes society itself is in disarray. A large number of their population is displaced, *has* fled, or is exposed to abuse and exploitation and cannot enjoy any of the guarantees that a state should be able to provide to its citizens.

Some states are at risk of becoming zones of lawlessness, in which terrorist and criminal activities can thrive. The uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources can be a breeding ground for criminal networks or conflicts - often with an ethnic connotation - where large numbers of weapons can circulate without restraint.

These states have to find the way back towards peace, stability, and the rule of law. They have to take charge again of their own future and, little by little, regain a perspective of development. This is not an easy task. The challenge is huge. Quasi-simultaneously, we need to rebuild the state institutions, disarm the combatants and give them new perspectives, reintegrate them in communities that are often impoverished, reorganize the armies and security forces, and give the State the means to reestablish its authority, organize elections, and create conditions for development.

We have to help them to break the vicious circle in which they find themselves, and to regain their place in the community of nations. In this respect, the establishment of a Peace Building Commission is crucial. The creation of this Commission does not only illustrate our common will to help these states on their path to recovery. It also and foremost allows us to better coordinate and focus our efforts in this matter. The political, humanitarian, military and financial means must be mobilized and used in an efficient way that will benefit our common goal.

This is particularly true for the sub-Saharan African countries that are battered by deadly and prolonged conflicts of which the civilian population is the first victim.

The creation of this Commission generates great hopes. It is our common responsibility to make it a success. Belgium wants to actively contribute, for example by sharing its experiences in the transition processes in DRC and Burundi.

Belgium also attaches great importance to the improvement of the protection of human rights. My country is very pleased with the reinforcement of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and with the decision to establish a Human Rights Council. But we regret that the Summit was not able to finalize the modalities of this Council. Belgium has fully supported the reform and will pursue its efforts. Democracy and respect for human rights are part of our common values and are the basis for our efforts to promote peace and stability. From now on, these values will be part of our collective security consensus and we will have to incorporate them in our global approach throughout the system of the United Nations. They are our common responsibility.

Amongst the other achievements of the Summit, I would also like to underline the "responsibility to protect". This represents a step forward in the search for solutions to the most glaring injustices. In the aftermath of the genocides that marked our last century, we solemnly pledged for such atrocities to never happen again.

Let me turn now to good governance, which is essential if our efforts to create a more stable and prosperous world are to be successful. Repeatedly, the Summit Outcome document underlines its importance -- and rightly so.

Good governance is not a moralizing concept, which is imposed from the outside. It is not about giving good and bad marks, and even less about good and bad students. And it is not for others to say what are "good policies" and what are "bad policies". No, good governance is synonymous with efficient governance, and go hand in hand with sovereignty.

It is all about governance capable of producing results, capable of making a difference for the citizens, capable of creating a development-friendly environment. Without this, the support of the international community cannot yield the expected results. Without this, the aid of the international community will not find the fertile environment necessary to create more prosperity and stability. We have committed ourselves to achieve the target of 0.7% of our GDP for ODA. We will keep our promise. But we are aware that development is not only about money. First and foremost it involves an efficient use of resources. Necessary conditions have to be established. What really matters is the result in the field. Poverty is not a fatality. All peoples have an ownership over their future, provided they seize the right opportunities.

We have stated this in the outcome document and I quote: "Good governance and Rule of Law are essential for sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger. In this outcome document we have also reaffirmed the importance of good governance and the rule of law, as well as the responsibility of each country for its own development. These are the parameters of our global partnership for development, set out in the Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Plan of Action.

The international community and all its components have shown their generosity, especially the European Union. But they can hardly be held responsible when States fail to protect and to assist all or part of their populations. It is hard to understand that we have to launch an appeal for donors to address the large-scale destruction of houses by a government that deliberately leaves approximately 500.000 of its citizens homeless.

This reasoning about "Good Governance" applies to similar concepts such as democracy and the rule of law. These are extremely important objectives both for the development of our societies and for the security of our States. Neither democracy, nor the rule of law can be artificially imposed from the outside. This is not about dictating exogenous models. However, it is necessary to create adequate conditions for a bottom-up approach that ensures an equitable and inclusive participation of populations in their own governance. In this regard, our first priority should be the modernisation of societies and States, the emancipation of women and children and their inclusion in global dynamics.

Past experience shows that the shortest way to democracy and rule of law is the modernisation of society. The role, indeed the responsibility, of the international community is to galvanize this modernisation process.

Mr. President,  
Dear Colleagues,

A great responsibility rests upon us. Before the end of the year, the Peace-building Commission has to be established. We have also committed ourselves to ensure that the Human Rights Council becomes operational.

I sincerely hope that the spirit that prevailed during the Summit will last during the 60th General Assembly.

We have to continue our work with determination, perseverance and vision. Only through our continuous commitment can the United Nations be *the* pre-eminent instrument in international relations.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues.

We bear an important responsibility. Our own credibility is at stake. Once again, the United Nations has to be the main instrument of our strategy to create a more stable and prosperous world for all of us. Our populations urge us to do so. Belgium is willing to take on this challenge and take up its responsibilities in this regard.

I thank you