



ESTONIA

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STATEMENT BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT THE
GENERAL DEBATE

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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Jan Eliasson, upon your election as President of the 60th session of the General Assembly. We have full confidence in you. I would also like to commend Mr. Jean Ping for the pivotal role played during the 59th session.

The leaders of the world gathered here last week at the largest summit meeting in history. The document adopted by the Heads of State and Government has given us concrete tasks for the future. The reform continues, we will have to maintain focus and take important decisions during the 60th session.

My remarks today will be confined to a few main topics with a specific emphasis on Estonia's contribution to our common goals.

Development, security and human rights are interconnected issues. It is inconceivable that global progress in these areas could be made without an effective multilateral system, in line with the principles of the UN Charter. As we pointed out in the final document a week ago, no country can tackle today's intricate challenges alone. We are firmly committed to strengthening the UN.

Mr. President,

We live in a global and interdependent world. We thus need to combine our efforts, and there has to be cooperation among organizations that have the capacity for conflict prevention and peace operations, as well as for providing logistical support, training etc.

The United Nations cannot hope to find a UN solution for all problems. Estonia is glad to see that the UN is actively forging a deeper partnership with different organizations. Estonia is actively participating in the common efforts of both the EU and NATO. We feel that the UN, EU and NATO should all continue working towards a mutually fruitful cooperation and towards a greater predictability in terms of the allocation of resources. The more we coordinate our activities, the better will be the results we can achieve in dealing with conflict, poverty, and human suffering. The EU has made great headway in developing the EU Battle groups, thus increasing our ability to react swiftly in crisis situations.

Estonia will continue to contribute through various organizations to the stability of Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, Kosovo, and the Middle East. Our long-term contribution to UN monitoring on the Israeli-Lebanese border; our explosive-detecting teams in Afghanistan, our substantive - considering the size of Estonia - presence in Kosovo, our assistance in training the new Iraqi police force, our participation in stabilizing Iraq, are just a few examples of Estonia's contribution to common efforts.

Estonia also acknowledges the need to develop African peacekeeping and to provide better training for UN peacekeepers. We hosted a UN peacekeeping "train the trainers" course in Estonia a few months ago. This seminar was attended by peacekeepers from roughly 30 countries.

Over years, we have shown our continued commitment to UN activities, including peacekeeping, in a simple and unequivocal way- by regularly paying, on time, the full amount of assessed contributions.

The role of the international community does not end at the point when we manage to stop an ongoing conflict. As we all know, without adequate state structures, a country faces the risk of relapsing into conflict. Therefore, Estonia welcomes the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, we hope to see the first results of its work fairly soon.

Dear Colleagues,

The next issue I would like to address is terrorism. Our position is unequivocal: terrorism is unacceptable in all circumstances and we should all be united against it. We regret that the Summit document does not condemn deliberate killing of civilians and non-combatants.

Estonia believes that the anti-terrorism strategy put forward by the Secretary-General should be adopted and implemented. We consider the conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism an utmost priority during this session of the General Assembly. Estonia fully implements all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and supports the initiatives of the United Nations and other international organizations in preventing and combating terrorism and its financing. A few days ago, Estonia signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

The proliferation of WMD-s is another pressing security concern. We regret that no agreement was reached on non-proliferation and disarmament.

Mr. President,

There is a serious concern over slow progress in the sphere of poverty eradication and the realization of other Millennium Development Goals.

Estonia, together with other European Union Member States, is increasing resources devoted to development cooperation. Despite our status as a neophyte donor, Estonia's ODA, in 2004, was already 0.08% of GNI. We are steadily increasing our input. This will also raise our voluntary contribution to UN development- related activities.

No state will be able to achieve the MDGs as long as it does not respect fundamental human rights. The second International decade of the World's Indigenous People coincides with the targeted timeframe for the accomplishment of the MDGs - 2015. If we

truly want to achieve the MDG goals, we must focus on the issues that matter most to people, including indigenous peoples. The implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in connection with the indigenous peoples has to be viewed within the broader context of the Millennium Declaration, which brings together the three basic aims of the UN Charter, namely peace and security, economic and social development and human rights.

One cannot, of course, leave aside the matter of climate change, the relevance of which has become especially clear as a result of recent natural disasters. Indeed, we have to step up global long-term co-operation, so that this cooperation could produce a real change.

Mr. President,

I would like to stress the significance the Human Rights Council. We see the Council as a standing Charter body, well – connected to other UN structures, including the Security Council. Human rights violators should not have a seat at the Council.

Estonia is committed to promoting human rights as universal values that should be guaranteed to all. We are pleased that the Summit agreed to double the regular budget for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights within the next five years. We believe this decision corresponds to the increasing responsibilities of the High Commissioner.

I would like to stress Estonia's firm belief in the extraordinary importance of democracy, good governance and the rule of law. Estonia supports the creation of the Democracy Fund. We will make a financial contribution to it.

Estonia applauds the agreement on responsibility to protect. We should all fulfil our commitments nationally. We should also be prepared to deal with cases of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and all other crimes against humanity urgently requiring outside interference, even if it has not been requested. In such cases, the international community has to take action.

As the founding member of the International Criminal Court we are disappointed not to see any reference to the ICC in the Outcome Document. We deem the Court as well as the other instruments of international justice vital to counter impunity for international crimes.

Mr. President,

60 years ago, the world leaders made a promise to prevent war, to defend human rights, and to help the peoples of the world to achieve safety, prosperity and freedom. Let us be bold and try harder than ever to achieve these goals. I thank you!