

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Permanent Mission of the  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
to the United Nations  
New York



البعثة الدائمة  
لدولة الامارات العربية المتحدة  
لدى الأمم المتحدة  
نيويورك

**Statement by**

**H.H. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan  
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**Head of Delegation**

**before**

**the General Debate of the Sixty-First Session  
of the United Nations General Assembly**

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Madam President,

It gives me pleasure to extend, on behalf of the Delegation of the United Arab Emirates, our heartfelt congratulations to Your Excellency and to your country, the Kingdom of Bahrain, on your election as President of the Sixty-First Session of the General Assembly. We are confident that your diversified experience will enable you to deal wisely and competently with the issues on our agenda, and we wish you every success.

We would also like to take this opportunity to commend your predecessor, H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson, for the skillful manner in which he managed the activities of the previous session, and to thank H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General, for his outstanding efforts, which have significantly contributed to strengthening the role of this international organization in addressing the challenges the world has faced during his term of office.

Madam President,

In spite of all the expectations we hoped would be achieved according to the recommendations of the last session in areas of establishing peace and collective security, development, strengthening human rights and rule of law, and reform of the United Nations, we meet today amid extremely serious security, political and economic conditions, which have resulted in increasing poverty, epidemics, and impaired the sustainable development mechanisms from achieving the desired development goals. Instead of intensifying our efforts towards strengthening international relations and enhancing positive investment of economic globalization, we had to direct our efforts towards finding temporary solutions for the grave security threats facing our world today, in many regions and on various levels.

The major weakness demonstrated in the performance of some bodies of this international organization in meeting these growing challenges, especially in bodies entrusted with building international peace and security, calls for us to reconsider the ways of reforming the main structures and working methods of this international organization, particularly the Security Council, which the latest events proved its inability to take the immediate and appropriate measures needed to stop acts of aggression and occupation. Therefore, and as we study the proposals made by the Secretary-General for developing the work of this organization, we must ensure that reform is based on the principles of equality among States in rights and duties in order to ensure that developing and small countries are increasingly and effectively represented in the Security Council in accordance with equitable geographical distribution. It is also necessary to strengthen the working procedures of the Security Council and ensure that it does not infringe upon the functions of the Secretariat, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in order to strengthen these bodies and increase their effectiveness.

Madam President,

The UAE, which collaborates with the other sisterly GCC countries, the League of Arab States and other groups, in supporting all possible diplomatic efforts and mediations aiming to contain the hotbeds of tension and conflicts in the Middle East region including the Arabian Gulf, reiterates the importance of resolving differences through peaceful means, and strengthening confidence-building measures based on the principle of respect for the sovereignty of States and their territorial integrity and non-interference in their internal affairs, under our common responsibility towards maintaining the requirements of regional and international peace, security and stability.

Therefore, we demand the Islamic Republic of Iran to demonstrate its goodwill towards finding a just and lasting settlement for its occupation of the three UAE islands; Greater and Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, through responding to our country's repeated initiatives, which were endorsed by the Gulf Co-operation Council, the Council of the League of Arab States, and the international community and which call for initiating direct and serious negotiations on this issue, or referring it to the International Court of Justice for legal arbitration. And as we have stated repeatedly in this hall, the UAE is willing to accept the decisions of this arbitration regardless of their consequences, which we are confident that they will ensure the return of these three islands, their continental shelf and air and economic zones to the full sovereignty of the UAE, as an integral part of the UAE.

Madam President,

We support the right of developing countries to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and we, optimistically, look forward to continuing the Iranian – European talks on Iran's nuclear question in order to reach a lasting and peaceful settlement for this question and to ensure that the safety and security of the countries of the region are not exposed to any threat, danger or unnecessary new confrontations. We also stress that the international community must deal with this question in the utmost transparent manner that ensures the implementation of all relevant resolutions of the United Nations, particularly the resolutions calling for the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, in the Middle East Region and the Arabian Gulf, which makes it incumbent upon Israel to accede to the NPT, and to subject all of its nuclear facilities to the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The United Arab Emirates supports the political process in Iraq and the efforts for its reconstruction, and hopes that the efforts of the Iraqi Government would lead to achieving national unity, consolidating security and stability in Iraq, and implementing the recommendations of the Abu Dhabi Declaration as well as the New York Conference on the International Compact for the reconstruction of Iraq.

We also reaffirm our full support to all regional and international measures aimed at combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as it constitutes a grave threat to the security and sovereignty of States, and causes unjustified depletion of civilian lives and properties. We also support international efforts aiming at convening an international conference that defines this phenomenon, address its causes, and set the standards of differentiating between terrorism and the right of people to self-determination.

While we all strive to create a suitable environment for promoting dialogue among civilizations and strengthening religious tolerance, we received with regret and surprise the recent statements of the Pope Benedict XVI, which gave the opportunity to the extremist parties to deepen the gap of intolerance, and to raise the doubts in the intentions of others, which makes it incumbent for us to avoid these acts or repeating these statements in the future in order to promote further understanding among civilizations and religious tolerance.

Madam President,

We are deeply concerned at the continued inability of the international community to solve the Palestinian question and establish peace in the Middle East, which encouraged Israel to continue its occupation of the Palestinian territories, Shabaa Farms and Syrian Golan, and repeat its aggressions on various levels.

Therefore, we urge the United Nations to respond today to the recent initiative of the League of Arab States, which calls upon the UN to play an effective role in reviving the peace process in the Middle East, and

resuming direct negotiations on all tracks, in accordance with the international legitimate resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative. We also affirm that consolidation of peace and stability in the Middle East region cannot be achieved through military power or the continued and deliberate destruction of the infrastructure in the Palestinian territories and Lebanon, but through compelling Israel to ensure its full compliance to the international resolutions, including resumption of negotiations with the Palestinian Authority, and release of the Palestinian funds and thousands of the Palestinian detainees and prisoners. Israel is further requested to open the crossing points to secure delivery of emergency humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, remove settlements and the separation wall, and ensure its full withdrawal from all the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, in order to declare the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with its capital as Al Quds Al Sharif.

We welcome the considerable efforts made by the Lebanese Government towards extending its control over its national territories, with the support of UNIFIL. In this regard, we demand the international community to intensify its pressures on Israel to compel it fulfill its legal obligations, which are provided in resolution 1701, including its full respect for Lebanon's sovereignty, handing over the landmines maps, and entering into negotiations on the exchange of prisoners. We also affirm the importance of doubling the international assistance directed to the reconstruction of Lebanon.

As for Sudan, and upon following up the circumstances relating to the issuance of resolution 1706, we hoped that Sudan would have been given sufficient time to resolve the Drafur question internally. In this context, we declare our support to the efforts made by the Sudanese Government aimed to find a lasting solution for this question, and we hope that the UN and the African Union would continue their positive role in this regard, in consistence with the efforts made by the Arab League of States and in order to maintain the sovereignty and independence of Sudan and its territorial integrity.

We also call for strengthening the efforts and endeavors aiming at the reconciliation of political differences and controversies in many regions such as in Somalia, Afghanistan and other African countries and troubled regions in the world, in order to contain tensions and conflicts in these regions, and assist their peoples to realize their aspirations towards permanent peace, stability and prosperity.

Madam President,

The UAE, which incorporated the MDGs in its national development policy and came a long way in the process of achieving economic and human development, has extended generous assistance to many poor and affected countries. And in this regard, the UAE would like to stress that the ongoing problems of poverty, infectious diseases and unemployment in addition to other economic, social and environmental problems call upon the international community to develop a firm and effective international mechanism that ensures continuous flow of assistance to developing countries, with a view to enabling them to improve their living conditions and build their national economies. This makes it incumbent upon the advanced States, especially the Group of Eight, to fulfill their commitments, as agreed upon at the international conferences, especially in the area of easing the onerous commercial conditions imposed on their trade, and on their efforts to attract foreign capitals and investments and use advanced technology for peaceful purposes, in order to avoid marginalizing these countries and ensure them a better participation in the international trade.

Madam President,

Finally, we hope that our deliberations on the agenda items of this session will lead to a positive outcome that contributes to addressing the critical issues we face today, and enhances our common efforts towards creating a world based on the principles of rule of law, justice, tolerance and peace.

Thank you Madam President