



ESPAÑA

INTERVENCIÓN DEL MINISTRO DE ASUNTOS EXTERIORES Y DE COOPERACIÓN

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**ANTE LA ASAMBLEA GENERAL DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS
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STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION

H.E. MR. MIGUEL ÁNGEL MORATINOS

**AT THE SIXTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, 28th September 2007

(Unofficial translation check against delivery)

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary General, Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to dedicate my first words to congratulate the new President, Mr. Srjam Kerim, for his election at the helm of this General Assembly. It is a great pleasure for me to address this General Assembly for the third time in order to take stock of the actions of the international community and to share commitments and reflections regarding the priorities of our agenda.

Mr. President,

When this world forum was created six decades ago, it was done out of will and need; by will made commitment and need made awareness.

The States that are represented today at this General Assembly are more committed and are more conscious of the need to advance in establishing peace, to fight against poverty, to protect human rights, and to further democracy and international law.

In our complex and uncertain world, new and old challenges coexist and new and old conflicts continue. The quality of our cooperation has increased, but poverty continues to hit a large sector of the world's population. We are advancing in the promotion and protection of human rights, but gross human rights violations persist. We search for peace, prosperity and shared dignity. What measures and instruments do we have to face these challenges? How can we adapt them in order to respond in the most effective manner?

Mr. President,

We know today that States alone cannot effectively deal with the global agenda and guarantee human development in a world that is ever more uncertain and interdependent, though not less stimulating and creative.

Means exist in the universal, regional, and bilateral dimensions, as well as in its multiple inter-relations. The structures and organizations that the international community has built with so much effort are a complex framework that we must reform, strengthen and update. Spain promotes an effective multilateralism, inspired by values and principles sustained by the people.

The international community senses the need for a greater level of political consensus and effective cooperation, a trend seen within the system of the United Nations, as well as in regional structures such as the European Union, the Ibero-American Community of Nations, or the OSCE. Spain participates in these organizations where you could sense with optimism that we are advancing. Despite the small rate of progress, there exists a global political consciousness regarding the challenges that affect demography, sustainable human and economic development, as well as its link with climate change.

Mr. President,

Peace is possible and necessary. Real peace, not just understood as the absence of war. We need to make way for peace and political reason in the Middle East, a region that is struck by violence and by dramatic tension that at the same time determines security and trust of the international community.

We must place the power of words before that of arms, trust before mistrust, commitment before fear and, in the face of disagreement, we must place dialogue and effective concerted action.

Spain wishes to help the different parties and join with the Quartet and its representative in the search for a definitive solution. In order to reach it, we must establish an open dialogue without any previous conditions, and reconnect with the inspiration from the Conference of Madrid. In order for peace to be complete, it must include Syria and Lebanon.

The meeting proposed by President Bush offers a right occasion to formalize everyone's commitment to this desired peace. Spain supports this initiative without any reservations.

We wish a Palestinian State that is peaceful, viable and democratic; that lives in peace with Israel. And an Israel that is secure and has good relations in its region. The international community is obliged to support and accompany the parties in their efforts. Spain is firmly determined to make its contribution effective.

Spain's commitment in the region is also demonstrated by our participation in UNFIL. I hope and wish that the Lebanese political forces find a consensual solution without any interference to their political crisis. I call for a political agreement in the name of peace and in the national interest of Lebanon and of the region.

The conflict in Western Sahara is one of the main obstacles to the integration process of the Arab Maghreb Union. We have actively committed ourselves to the search of a political agreement that is just and definitive; one that respects the principle of self-determination within the framework of the United Nations. Spain trusts in that with the assistance of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary General of the UN and with the support of friendly nations, all the parties will advance and that the direct negotiations that have already been initiated will culminate in an agreement.

Constructive trust is fundamental, and this has been the embryo of the Forum of Dialogue on Gibraltar in which important agreements have been reached in matters of local cooperation that benefit everyone. Spain desires to advance in the process of reaching a definitive solution to the sovereignty dispute in accordance with the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations.

We have seen asymmetric advances in conflicts that have a history of devastation and violence. We have also witnessed progress and mobility in conflicts that have reached a deadlock such as in Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Transnistria, as well as in what regards to the imminent ruling of the status of Kosovo.

Mr. President,

Peace is possible and necessary, and we are advancing towards it despite being hit by terrorism, a severe threat to peace and security. This global violence aims to undermine stability of free and democratic societies and, as we agreed one year ago in the Global Strategy Against Terrorism, we must prevail over that violence by coordinating our efforts and responding collectively.

We are glad that in our determination to defeat terrorism, victims and their families have not been forgotten, and that the international community continues to be encouraged to show respect for them. I believe that it is a just acknowledgement, and without it, the strategy against global terrorism would be incomplete.

Spain participates in peacekeeping operations authorized and mandated by the Security Council in Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Kosovo. Allow me, within the framework of this General Assembly, to pay homage of gratitude to the Spanish Armed Forces, to the State security forces, and to those involved in cooperation activities, for their effort, work, and solidarity in favour of peace. In particular, I extend this homage to the Spaniards who lost their lives in this effort, as well as to their families and friends, especially since only four days ago, two Spanish military officers died in Afghanistan.

To assist in the logistics of peacekeeping operations, Spain has offered to establish a United Nations support base in the Spanish city of Quart de Poblet, in Valencia. A communications center will be established there for the development of peacekeeping operations on the ground.

Mr. President,

It is possible to defeat poverty. It is an ethical and political obligation. An obligation that Spain is firmly determined to assume. With humility and satisfaction my country is today the eighth contributor to the United Nations system, and our goal is to devote 0.7% of our GDP to development aid by 2012. In only 3 years and backed by political and social consensus, we have reinforced the area of cooperation both in terms of human and economic resources, getting close to 4,5 billion euros this year. Spain is a country that demonstrates profound solidarity and commitment to the goals set in the Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty.

We strive for access to drinking water and sanitation to be an effective and universal right. Water will be the central theme at the 2008 International Exposition in Zaragoza. This event will give participating countries and visitors insight into the main dimensions of water in the 21st century, such as environment, international cooperation, and prospects for scientific, technological and economic management. I encourage and invite you to participate in the Expo on water and sustainable development in Zaragoza 2008.

Spain wishes to facilitate the structural strengthening of the United Nations, and believes it is a priority to bring about reform on the institutional and management levels, where global civil society contributions should be taken into consideration.

These ideas allow us to highlight the progress made in the Security Council reform issue in the last GA session and during your predecessor's mandate. It is indispensable that this very sensitive matter be settled through a political decision adopted by consensus, and not in haste.

We welcome the Human Rights Council as a forum to debate issues related to rights and freedoms. Spain reiterates its trust in this body and its desire to become a part of it next year.

The protection and promotion of human rights is a fundamental pillar of Spanish foreign policy because we are convinced that their violation entails oppression and violence.

We long for the adoption of the resolution to abolish the death penalty, or at least, for the application of a universal moratorium during this period of sessions.

Mr. President,

The Alliance of Civilizations will mobilize the international community and global civil society to stop the risk of polarization caused by prejudices, wrong perceptions, and extremisms that can disturb global co-existence. The High Representative of the Secretary General, Dr. Jorge Sampaio, has presented its work programme, and a trust fund for voluntary contributions has been set up with the support of the Group of Friends, accounting for more than 70 States and International Organizations.

Mr. President,

This has been a good year for Spain, and we would like to share it with the international community. Our presence abroad has increased due to the dynamism of our citizens, institutions, economic stability, and business activity, all in all favoring greater openness to the rest of the world.

This is not the time for discouragement, but for commitment and optimism. An objective and rational analysis of the progress made by the international community in the last few years inspires hope and strengthens the will to work towards the development of a balanced agenda that includes the challenges of our times. The Member States of this General Assembly are today more aware than ever that only with a united action in solidarity can we face these challenges effectively, using political dialogue, preventive diplomacy, and public and humanitarian diplomacy.

The assessment of Spain is positive, and in that regard, quoting the Spanish poet Blas de Otero, "I ask for peace and to speak... in defense of man and his justice". A word of commitment that shies away from rhetoric to transform itself into action.

Thank you very much.