



**PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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Statement

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General Debates

of the 63rd session of the United Nations General Assembly

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Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset I have the honor to congratulate H.E. Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann of Nicaragua on his election to the post of the President of the 63rd session of the United Nations General Assembly and wish him every success in his endeavors.

I would like also to pay tribute to his predecessor H.E. Mr. Srgjan Kerim for his active collaboration with the Delegations throughout the last session.

I wish also to express my profound respect for the able leadership demonstrated by H.E. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in the management of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

The effectiveness of international security system impacts on the authority of the United Nations. When the agreement among the Security Council members on the approaches to overcome the challenges to the world peace seems elusive, then it seriously impacts on the common security and credibility of the United Nations.

We shall respect our shared values and accept the restraints inherent in those values in order to find an approach that is based on a global consensus. The UN Security Council shall fully realize its primary responsibility for the collective management of threats that transcends national boundaries and have implications on international security. All of us must strictly follow the UN Charter as a unique instrument of international relations.

The reforms of the United Nations and its Security Council will further improve the credibility of the UN system. Success of the reforms will depend on our political willingness to deliver expected results.

We need to harmonize diverging views in order to arrive at a generally acceptable solution that shall reflect the universal character of the United Nations and make it adequate to the present-day realities.

We shall enhance the role of the General Assembly as the supreme policy-making organ of the United Nations. It is only through the reinforcement of the Assembly's mandate that we can successfully tackle some of the most pressing issues facing humanity.

Mr. President,

This meeting is taking place at a very critical juncture for the South Caucasus region and international community as a whole. The worrisome events happened last month in Georgia have clearly shown that restoring stability in the region requires our collective efforts to strengthen international security system.

Obviously, situation in the region is a subject of our concern, and Azerbaijan is already making its contribution to decrease tensions. We firmly believe that issues that cause disagreements in the region shall be settled peacefully through dialogue on the basis of norms and principles of international law and mutual respect.

The Georgian case has also proved that the protracted conflicts existing in the GUAM area, including the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, remain a major source of instability and a fragile cease-fire regime can not be a substitute for a lasting and durable peace in the region.

Persistence of these conflicts endangers international peace and security as well as prevents us to fully utilize the potential of this strategically important region, situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia.

Resolution of the protracted conflicts in the GUAM area will bring its immediate benefits not only to the affected countries, but will substantially contribute to stability and regional security.

In this context the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform initiated by Turkey could serve as a good departure point for building the regional security system. It is of utmost importance to ensure that our common efforts are built on the principles of mutual respect for territorial integrity and recognition of existing borders, equality and good neighborliness.

Prerequisite for the establishment of cooperation and good neighborly relations in the region is the withdrawal of the Armenian troops from the occupied lands and restoration of full sovereignty of Azerbaijan over these territories. Only through this, we could pave the way for peace and economic prosperity of the entire region.

Mr. President,

The soonest resolution of the armed conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan remains a primary task for us.

The Government of Azerbaijan is committed to the peaceful settlement of the conflict on the basis of the norms and principles of international law, including relevant UN Security Council resolutions, UN General Assembly resolutions and OSCE documents.

In order to facilitate the negotiation process, Azerbaijan initiated during the 62nd session of the General Assembly consideration of the agenda item entitled “The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan”. The Assembly comprehensively addressed the issue and adopted the resolution A/RES/62/243.

We highly appreciate the principled support of the Member States of the General Assembly to the resolution, which reaffirmed the Assembly’s continued respect and support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders and demanded withdrawal of Armenian forces from all the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The resolution also “reaffirmed that no State shall recognize as lawful the situation resulting from the occupation of the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, nor render aid or assistance in maintaining this situation”. It recognized “the inalienable right of the population expelled from the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan to return to their homes, and stressed the necessity of creating appropriate conditions for this return, including the comprehensive rehabilitation of the conflict-affected territories”.

The Assembly recognized the necessity of providing normal, secure and equal conditions of life for the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which will allow an effective democratic system of self-governance to be built up in this region within the Republic of Azerbaijan.

I would like to stress that the principles laid out in the resolution will be used as a basis in the negotiation process. The UN General Assembly will continue to follow the situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan under the agenda item 18 of the current session.

Mr. President,

In recent years Azerbaijan has made crucial contributions to strengthening the regional stability by promoting security, energy, communication and economic cooperation projects. Production and secure delivery of hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian Sea to the international markets has been an important element of Azerbaijan’s foreign and economic policy. We will continue the realization of the strategy that would substantially improve energy security and economic perspectives in the region and beyond.

Another strategic project under implementation is the construction of Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway linking our country with Georgia and Turkey through major transport connection. It will create an essentially new and effective communication corridor between Europe and Asia.

Economic development and growth of Azerbaijan has been on the rise. Our GDP growth rate remains one of the highest in the world and has reached 18 per cent in nine months of 2008. According to the forecast of international financial institutions the growth rate will retain its dynamics for the next year.

Azerbaijan is of the view that facilitating trade offers enormous opportunities to pursue the development objectives. Against this background the joint report of the World Bank and International Finance Corporation “Doing business in 2009” recognized Azerbaijan as the top reformer in 2007/08 in implementing business regulatory reforms and as one of the leading countries with investment-friendly economies. According to the report out of 181 countries Azerbaijan took the first spot in improving the commercial environment and encouraging business start-ups.

Azerbaijan strongly believes that these factors are central for attracting and mobilizing financial resources to support socio-economic development of the country.

In the meantime we are the champions in the implementation of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and consider the adoption without a vote by the General Assembly of the resolution A/RES/62/274 on the EITI as a sign of global recognition of our efforts.

Mr. President,

Protection and promotion of human rights is one of the central duties of the international community. Today, it is not merely a question of protecting individuals but is fundamental for promoting peace and stability across the globe.

Azerbaijan remains actively involved in the work of the UN human rights bodies. As a member of the Human Rights Council, Azerbaijan attaches great importance to efficient functioning of the Council. It is our common task and responsibility to ensure that this institution lives up to the expectations vested into it and becomes truly an objective, vigorous and credible universal human rights body.

Azerbaijan is fully committed to all its obligations taken as a Member State of various international organizations to promote democracy, rule of law and human rights. We believe that through consistent reforms and investments into education we will achieve a long-term stability and prosperity in our part of the world.

Thank you.