



STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES,
FELIPE CALDERÓN HINOJOSA
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE
63RD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
UNITED NATIONS

New York, September 24th, 2008

**ADDRESS BY MR. FELIPE CALDERÓN HINOJOSA, PRESIDENT OF
MEXICO, TO THE LXIII SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, 24 september 2008

**Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary General,**

Allow me first to congratulate Mr. Miguel D'Escoto on his election to the presidency of this Assembly. It is an honor for Latin America to have you leading its work.

I have come to the United Nations to reaffirm Mexico's permanent commitment to strengthen our multilateral system and to build a world order that is more human, more just, more prosperous and more secure.

The problems and the challenges that are faced by humankind demand a renewed and strengthened United Nations Organization. Mexico is convinced that the UN is at a definitive historical moment. Global challenges of the 21st century are testing the leadership and the vitality of the organization. Threats to global security are not only the result of conflicts between states, but of the challenges posed by the activities of non state actors such as international organized crime groups and drug trafficking. These threats also include the degradation of the environment, pandemics, extreme poverty, and massive violations of human rights.

Mr. President:

Few challenges have as high a priority for our generation as that of reversing the effects of climate change. This phenomenon affects indiscriminately the rich countries as well as the poor ones, and paradoxically those that have contributed the least to it often are those that are the most vulnerable.

Climate change is not a problem to be faced by nations according to their degree of development. It is a task that requires the translation of words into deeds that are to be substantiated by concrete proposals that are based on the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities.

This is why Mexico has proposed the creation of a Green Fund within the framework of the UN to allow incentives for states to redouble their efforts in this matter. It is a great satisfaction for us to see that organizations like the World Bank have already taken the initiative to broaden the availability of resources for the benefit of the countries that need them.

I respectfully call upon all nations, especially the most developed, to contribute to the establishment of this Green Fund for the creation of financial instruments to protect the environment on a global scale.

Mexican Nobel Prize Octavio Paz said: *"cualesquiera que sean las formas de organización política y social que adopten las naciones, la cuestión más inmediata y apremiante es la supervivencia del medio natural. Defender a la naturaleza es defender a los hombres"* [whatever the form of political and social organization chosen by nations, the paramount issue is the survival of the natural being. To defend nature is to defend mankind.]

We do not have the time or the possibility to elude our responsibility before another global challenge: the international rise of food prices. We must act decidedly to prevent this situation from stopping or slowing down the efforts to overcome poverty.

In order to insure food security, the Government of Mexico has developed an action plan that aims to facilitate the access to the supply of food that includes a sharp reduction of taxes on basic product imports; the irrigation infrastructure and productivity in the countryside; the establishment of a Strategic Reserve of Basic Products and the increase of direct and conditioned financial grants to the six million poorest families of the country as compensation on account of the rise in food prices.

It is a fact that many countries not only will not be able to attain the goals set at the Summit of 2000, but that some have even experienced setbacks.

Despite this unfavorable framework, Mexico is complying with practically all of the Millennium Development Objectives. In fact we have set for ourselves additional objectives that are reflected in our National Development Plan.

A program called Opportunities has helped to reduce extreme poverty, which has gone from 38 million persons ten years ago to under 15 million.

We have also reached universal basic education, and for the year 2011 we shall reach the goal of universal health as it should be the goal of every country: medical attention, medicines and treatment for all Mexicans.

We live in the era of shared responsibility. No one escapes the notion that in a globalized world the consequences of our actions transcend the territory of our countries and have an effect on the planet as a whole. Mexico and Latin America face security threats that are a good example of common challenges: the illicit drug, weapons and human trafficking knows no borders. Latin America is today one of the regions in the world with the most violent deaths, which has become one of the most limiting aspects of our development.

In Mexico we have been facing the problem of organized crime and of delinquency that are hurting our society and our democratic institutions. Mexican families have decided to live in a peaceful and lawful country, in a country in which crime and impunity are not to be tolerated.

However, the frontal combat that we have undertaken requires international shared responsibility. Mexico reiterates the call to all nations to seek new forms of cooperation against these threats. The eradication of these plights is at the center of Mexico's national security policy and our international agenda.

There is also an increasing challenge to the principles and values that seemed to be rooted within the international community. The fundamental principles of democracy and human rights have also been questioned either on behalf of security or based on the pre-eminence of social and economic rights. On the 60th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, Mexico calls upon the Member States to defend the universal values that are a precondition for human development and the rule of law.

Mr. President:

Migration is another global issue. In the modern world more than 200 million persons live outside their country of origin. The causes of international migration are quite complex. They range from the consolidation of an integration process, to labor requirements, to the lack of adequate economic and living conditions, and even internal or inter-state conflicts.

Migration cannot be reduced to security or its management considered an economic problem. This is why Mexico is of the view that the international community must see this issue in an

integrated manner that allows for migratory flows to be legal, safe, orderly and respectful of human dignity. The UN must take up its responsibility fully with respect to this global issue and guided by the principle of shared responsibility for the countries of origin, transit and destination.

Terrorism, whatever its justification or ideological motivations, has no place in the community of values that we have forged with so much difficulty. Mexico condemns it and affirms its will to cooperate on the basis of international law in order to prevent terrorist acts and to punish its authors.

It is a paradox that all of these problems that can only be solved with global action that require the mediation of the United Nations.

Mr. President:

As Mexicans we do not evade our global responsibilities. We want to be actors, not spectators to the transformations of the world. We have decided to strengthen our activism because Mexico's population is in the 11th position and its economy is in the 12th on an international scale, and it also has a long tradition of contributions to peace and international law.

This is why Mexico has presented its candidacy to a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the period 2009-2010. If elected to it, my country commits itself to act on the basis of the main values shared by the international community:

- Peaceful settlement and prevention of disputes;
- Interdiction of the use of force as a recourse or as a threat;
- Respect for the principles spelled in the United Nations Charter and for International Law and Human Rights.

Our participation in the Security Council will be aimed to promote Mexico's ideals of democracy, peace and the rule of law. We shall also strive to support the work of the Council whenever it is oriented to the rebuilding of societies and institutions that have been torn apart by war or one of the newly formed threats. We shall work to mitigate the antagonisms between states – at the earliest stage – within the International Court of Justice.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Our generation has the historic responsibility to act, here and now, to meet the challenges of all humankind. The United Nations is the forum that best represents the diversity of human beings, the plurality of nations and the collective aspirations of wellbeing and progress for our civilization. I am talking about a privileged alliance formed to guarantee a world of peace and justice, of security and development where all can enjoy its opportunities and wellbeing.

Multilateralism is the way of the 21st century. It is the integrated response to globalization. We must pool our strengths in order to make it possible for the UN to make into reality the dream of its founders: peace, security and development for all the peoples of the planet.

Thank you very much.