

United Nations  Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

6 February 2009

**Statement of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,
President of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly,
to the United Nations Association, USA Mid-Atlantic Regional Assembly**

Dear Members of the United Nations Association,
Friends All,

I regret I am unable to join you in person at this Mid-Atlantic Regional meeting of UNA/USA, but I do want to welcome you to the United Nations and express my gratitude to all of you as supporters of the United Nations. Your assembly celebrates the importance of your individual membership in the United Nations Association, an organization that seeks to support the United Nations by explaining its work, principles and relevance to the American public. Today you will also explore the very timely subject of the UN's relationship with the United States during the year ahead. It is a debate that we in the United Nations are following closely.

I am fortunate to be presiding over the 63rd session of the General Assembly during this remarkable period of crisis and, we all hope, change. As you may know, I assumed this post determined to facilitate the needed democratization of the United Nations. This requires a reassertion of the authority and credibility of the General Assembly, the world's most representative and democratic forum. Its mandated authority has been eroded over time, especially as it relates to other UN organs and international financial, monetary and trade institutions.

I firmly believe that we can emerge from this period of crisis with stronger commitments to peace, the eradication of poverty and global efforts to save our dear Mother Earth, but only if there are major changes in how we treat each others as peoples and as States. The United States is reaffirming its global commitment to the rule of law and the letter and the spirit of the UN Charter. Its leadership in our quest for truly democratic global governance is a challenge that it can and must assume once again. The year ahead will be crucial in redefining this renewed spirit of multilateralism and support for democracy at all levels. With enormous hope, I am confident that UNA/USA can press hard for this new leadership. I am eager to hear the results of your exchange.