

# ISRAEL

---

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

---

**United Nations  
60th General Assembly**

**Address**

**Silvan Shalom**

**Deputy Prime Minister  
and Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of Israel**

**New York, 20 September 2005**

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my unique pleasure to praise His Excellency, Ambassador Dan Gillerman, my emissary to the United Nations, upon his assumption of the Presidency of this session of the General Assembly, and wish him much success.

Mr. President,

These are optimistic times in the Middle East.

The Iron Wall, that has defined Israel's relations with most of the Arab and Muslim world for generations, is coming down.

Israel's contacts with Arab and Muslim states are growing, at a rate never seen before.

Countries – like Pakistan and others - who in the past refused to acknowledge our shared humanity, today are extending their hand in friendship and recognition.

Relations with key Muslim states such as Turkey, are flourishing, while our peaceful ties with both Egypt and Jordan, are improving all the time.

Here in New York this week, I have had the honour of meeting with more than ten of my colleagues from the Arab and Muslim world, a number unthinkable, even two years ago.

These meetings have been friendly, as befits meetings between countries which have no conflict – neither over territory, nor economy.

Israel welcomes this new readiness for contact, and we encourage our neighbours to build on the foundations that we are now laying.

Contacts between Israel and its Arab and Muslim neighbours, are good for the region, and good for peace.

We all share a common interest in building a region of tolerance and cooperation - a region where the moderates hold the initiative, not the extremists, whose violence has set the agenda for so long.

Indeed, those who genuinely wish to help the Palestinians - and to bring them the benefits of peace and prosperity - must realise, that building contact and cooperation with Israel, is a crucial element in this process.

Possibilities for cooperation abound.

In fields as diverse as agriculture, health, environment, transportation and electricity, the potential benefits of Middle East regional cooperation, are immense.

Such cooperation can bring tangible and immediate economic benefits, as Israel's improving relations with Jordan and Egypt have shown.

Unfortunately, many of our ties with the Arab and Muslim world are still deep in the shadows, away from the public eye.

Today, I call on my Arab and Muslim colleagues to bring our contacts out into the light of day, so that our peoples may understand our shared desire to work with each other, to bring peace and prosperity to our region.

I call on the leaders of the Arab and Muslim world, to join us in speaking to our publics, of peace rather than conflict, of reasons to cooperate, rather than reasons to boycott.

In November of this year, I will sit alongside my Arab and Muslim colleagues at two international gatherings – the World Summit on the Information Society in Tunisia, and the summit of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, in Barcelona.

I call upon the international community - and my Arab and Muslim counterparts - to work together with us, to ensure that these meetings result in concrete projects, that will help reinforce our peace efforts on the ground.

This is also the time, for the international community to renew its investment in the future of the Middle East, by reviving the multilateral track of the Middle East peace talks.

Mr. President,

Just one week ago, Israel completed the evacuation of all Israeli communities in the Gaza Strip.

Entire families - many of whom had lived and tilled these lands for three generations - were called upon by their government to leave, and to begin their lives anew.

Today, there are no more Israelis in Gaza.

Israeli military rule is now over.

Responsibility for the affairs of Gaza and its residents, is now in Palestinian hands.

Israel's actions have opened the door to a new future, and we invite our neighbours to walk together, through that door.

We are committed to the Roadmap, and we wish to get back to its full implementation.

For this, we need a partner.

A partner who is committed - as we are - to the peaceful resolution of our differences, and to the democratic and universal principles, on which peace is founded.

Israel attaches great importance to this Palestinian assumption of responsibility.

In it, lies the key to progress towards peace.

The transfer of responsibility for Gaza, provides the Palestinian side with the chance to take their fate into their own hands.

An opportunity not just to say that they want to govern, but to show that they are ready, and able, to do so.

Gaza, we hope, will serve as a model, of how the Palestinian Authority is able to build a functioning, democratic and peaceful society.

Recognizing the significance of this moment, Israel is taking great pains, to ensure that Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, is given every opportunity to establish his authority.

We seek to ensure conditions, which will benefit ordinary Palestinians, without posing a security threat to Israel.

Israel has also expressed its strong support for international aid and assistance, for the social and economic development of Gaza, and we are committed to facilitating these efforts.

Mr. President,

Constructive international engagement is crucial to the Palestinian Authority's success.

The international community's priority now, must be ensuring that the Palestinian Authority and its institutions, can deliver the services and outcomes, their people and ours, expect and deserve.

Economic reconstruction, of course, is not enough.

**The Palestinian Authority must also deliver on its commitment to end the campaign of terror against Israel.**

For Israel, security is an issue on which we will never compromise.

We insist on the end of terror, and the dismantlement of Its infrastructure - for the safety of our citizens, and so that our peace efforts can succeed.

Turning Gaza into a model of success, also requires that the Palestinian Authority act, to promote and protect democracy from its enemies.

Here - as with security - there is no room for discounts.

Simply holding elections is no guarantee of moderation and responsible government.

## RAMAS

Two days ago in Gaza, the terrorist organization Hamas held a rally of ten thousand armed men dedicated to a Holy War against Israel.

Like al-Qaeda, and the other organizations in the global network of terror, Hamas seeks to destroy everything that the international community, and the moderates in our region, seek to build – tolerance, democracy, peace.

Hamas is responsible for the deliberate murder of hundreds of Israeli civilians – amongst them scores of women and children.

Israel can not - and will not – grant legitimacy to such an organization.

We will not cooperate with its desire to participate in the forthcoming Palestinian elections.

And we call on the international community to make clear, its own opposition, to the inclusion of such terrorists in the democratic process.

If Gaza is indeed to be the positive model we all wish to see, then it is those who promote dialogue - not violence - who must be empowered.

Mr. President,

The central threat to global security – and to renewed momentum towards dialogue and peace in the Middle East today - is Iran and its nuclear ambitions.

As the speech before this Assembly of the newly-elected president of Iran so clearly demonstrated, Iran's fanatic regime remains determined to proceed with its nuclear weapons program.

Israel welcomes the efforts of the international community - in particular France, Britain and Germany, backed by the United States - to deny Iran the ability, to terrorise the world with nuclear weapons.

The Member States of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency are meeting at this very moment in Vienna to discuss this urgent matter.

I call on them to stop this evil regime from acquiring nuclear weapons.

The security and stability of the entire globe is at stake.

This is why it is essential – and urgent - that the Security Council take action.

The international community must rally as one - and use all the means at its disposal - to stop Iran, before it goes nuclear.

We must not allow the fate of mankind to rest in the hands of the tyrants of Tehran.

Mr. President,

In January of this year, this Assembly convened in Special Session to commemorate the Holocaust, and pay tribute to the brave soldiers and nations who freed European Jewry - and the world - from the calamity of that darkest nightmare.

Israel commends the community of nations for standing up in unison, on this anniversary, in commitment to the cry - "never again".

We commend the recognition of the Secretary General, and of this Assembly, that Holocaust remembrance must be a universal commitment.

Ultimately, it is only the determined defence of the universal values of tolerance, and the sanctity of each human life, which will protect us from tyranny and extremism.

In this spirit, Israel calls on the General Assembly to adopt a resolution - initiated by Israel and other like-minded countries - commemorating the Holocaust, and calling for global educational efforts, to ensure that its lessons are learnt.

Particularly today - the day the world's greatest Nazi-hunter, Simon Wiesenthal, has passed away - we are reminded, that the Holocaust is passing from human memory to history.

As the generation of survivors leaves us — who will tell their story, if not us?

Mr. President,

The Special Session to commemorate the Holocaust is only one example, of the welcome shift in the attitude of this institution towards Israel.

Our recent election as vice President of this Assembly, is another.

I wish to commend the Secretary General for his unique contribution to this positive trend.

Israel's relations with the UN are better today than they have ever been.

Nevertheless they are still far from what they should be.



I call on all the states gathered here, to examine how they, too, can contribute to promoting a more balanced and constructive UN approach to Israel.

The United Nations can not be true to its own lofty and universal principles, if it continues to waste scarce resources, and serve as a forum of hostility and prejudice, against one of its own.

The United Nations was born of the noble vision — to bring the ideals of peace, security and human rights to all peoples.

Sadly, UN reality remains far removed from the UN ideal.

Major reform is urgent and crucial.

Israel joins our fellow member states and their peoples, in the desire to see the UN fulfill the vision of its founders.

To see the UN serving as a force for good, in meeting the many challenges of our age.

Israel seeks to take its rightful place, as a country with full and equal rights in this institution.

We seek to realise our full potential to contribute to the global agenda.

This is why I have decided to present — for the first time — Israel's candidacy for membership of the Security Council.

Mr. President,

It was the wisest leader of ancient Israel, King Solomon, who wrote — and I would like to quote in Hebrew first

*"לכל זמן ועת תחת השמיים, עת לבכות ועת לשחוק...עת לאהוב ועת לשנוא; עת מלחמה ועת שלום".*