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PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Adam Daniel ROTFELD

**Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Poland**

**to the General Debate of the Sixtieth Session
of the General Assembly**

September 21st, 2005
United Nations, New York

Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. President on your election. Allow me to assure you of the readiness of Poland to support you in your efforts during this session.

I would also like to join the EU presidency, to whose statement we fully adhere, in expressing 60th words of gratitude to H.E. Mr. Jean Ping for his leadership during the process of preparation of the 60 anniversary Summit.

Mr. Presiden!,

Excellencies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year in Poland we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Solidarity movement. In the history of Europe since the World War II, there have been few events whose anniversaries could be celebrated with a similar sense of pride or satisfaction. The history of the Solidarity and in particular its rebirth in 1989 opened the way to profound historic changes in Europe and the entire world, including the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Communist block. I hope and believe that the Solidarity's message still remains an inspiration not only for Poland but also for the entire world, wherever there are people who uphold or aspire for freedom and solidarity. In this spirit, I would like to repeat our call to celebrate the 31st of August as a World Day of Freedom and Solidarity. In our opinion, global solidarity should be perceived as the central value and the key concept by which *we* strive to achieve a new sense of community and our common interests.

Mr. President, Excellencies,

Polish dedication to the concept of solidarity draws its strength from the fact that Poland itself benefited from the foreign aid and support. Today, we undergo the important transition from the status of a recipient of aid to that of a donor. We hope that the Polish active cooperation for development will further serve as a catalyst for change to provide the foundation of democracy, sustainable development, human rights and the rule of law.

For us, however, the concept of responsible solidarity is not solely about humanitarian endeavor. It means more than assisting the poor and underdeveloped. Solidarity is an operational principle, which generates cooperative attitudes amongst countries in need including those plagued by terrorism, natural and man-made disasters, calamities, weak state structures and others. Solidarity means rescue rather than relief, remedy rather than alleviation. It should be driven by need, not by right - across dividing lines.

It is solidarity that can help to bridge religious and ideological divides and to overcome the difficult legacy of the past. Indeed, if we want to build a world without divisions we must first suppress all disputes nurtured by the past. We have to find the means of reconciliation between divergent points of view without sacrificing our principles.

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

The just-concluded High-level Plenary meeting was a product of the enormous efforts to forge a new global consensus on development, security, human rights and United Nations institutional reform.

The agenda of the Summit was long and ambitious. The preparatory process, as well as the summit itself offered many insights, ideas and useful recommendations that further merit serious considerations. However, despite great determination and numerous expectations, we have proved incapable of achieving unity in confronting all of the world's most menacing problems.

The United Nations is a ponderous institution and does not embrace change easily. Thus, we should not expect that each and every summit will provide revolutionary changes. The real breakthrough comes usually in the wake of lengthy processes of change. Consequently, our *outcome document* should be regarded not as an end of the reform, but as a point of reference for further practical steps.

In this context, let me request you to consider and submit to the General Assembly an implementation plan of the Summit decisions. This time, we must break the vicious circle of inaction and ensure the proper follow-up to the summit. Finding workable forms and mechanisms of cooperation has never proved easy and will remain a serious challenge for the months ahead.

Excellencies,

The United Nations operates in the constantly changing international environment. We have already identified new major threats, risks and challenges: the fanaticism of international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, states in distress and failed states. Although we claim to know their nature, we will never be quite able to predict how, where and when they will manifest themselves. At the same time, these threats cannot overshadow the importance of their root causes such as development gap, poverty, social exclusion, natural disasters, discrimination, intolerance and many others.

We are passing through a transitional stage with all its strains and distresses. International institutions and mechanisms, designed to serve the old international system are exposed to the challenge of reform and accommodation. The United Nations is not an exception. As a consequence, we had to find ways and means to respond to the swiftly changing nature of security threats and risks. Thus, the challenge remains the same as for all of us: how to manage that change.

Excellencies,

In the era of globalization and rapid change, no single country can fully ensure its own security. State security is more dependent upon external determinants than ever before. What we need is an innovative and imaginative approach to security both in the realm of strategy and its constituent processes. Moreover, we have to develop a new security paradigm where security of individuals is increasingly becoming as important as the security of States.

Likewise, we need a new concept of sovereignty where protecting the rights of people is increasingly more important than protecting the prerogatives of States' power. We must bring the human being to the center of activities of international institutions.

It is true, that the first duty of a government should be to protect those living within its jurisdiction from genocide, mass killing and human rights violations. However, in the certain instances responsibility of international community to take action must be assured.

Mr. President, Excellencies,

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is definitely an old problem, which has been with an international community for many years. However, in light of the particularly threatening nexus of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, it has currently got a new dimension. No state is immune to it and protected from its consequences. At the same time, the existing systems of national control and international nonproliferation agreements are not completely effective and thus undermined by loopholes and lacunae, which enable states and individuals to bypass the regime. So it is all the more disappointing that the UN summit failed to reach an outcome on nonproliferation and disarmament.

To cope properly with this challenge, we have to strengthen the three pillars of the nuclear arms control regime: nonproliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses. We should, however, ensure that it works in a harmonious and a self-sustaining way.

Another question is that of enforcement. Legal norms without effective enforcement obviously do not serve their purpose. We have to look for ways and means to ensure effective verification and to enforce the application of the existing nonproliferation and disarmament obligation. We cannot solely count on persuasion and containment.

More fundamentally, we need a comprehensive review of the existing negotiating machinery. With this in mind, two ways of action seem possible. One would be to establish a group of experts, the other - perhaps the better one - to request a respected international independent research center (like for example SIPRI) to

prepare a report with recommendations how to transform the existing UN institutions and mechanisms into a more effective, operational and efficient bodies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our concerted efforts to strengthen the United Nations are doomed to failure if we believe that only security issues matter. They certainly do, but security is a much broader concept. It is not only about the absence of hard or soft threats. It is, above all, about the absence of threats to fundamental human values. Likewise, the elimination of poverty is not only essential to peace and development, but first and foremost to the preservation of human rights and standards. Ensuring social justice and reducing inequalities do not merely involve allocation of scarce resources to guarantee security. Instead, they presuppose both human freedom and human dignity. In this context Poland welcomes the proposed changes in the UN machinery of human rights, especially a decision to establish a Human Rights Council. We believe that this organ would enable us to foster human rights in a more efficient and responsible way.

We should also promote democracy through the United Nations to protect human rights and expand democratic freedoms. No one claims that democracies are without their contradictions and injustices. But it is democracies that best serve to defend values we want to protect and promote. In this spirit, on the behalf of Polish citizens, I would like to reiterate our sincere and strong support for the Democracy Fund established to assist countries in their democratic transition. I truly believe that this new mechanism will help to manage differences between and within societies them with true respect and understanding.

Excellencies,

The Polish commitment to the community of shared values does not mean that we disregard the institutional and technical aspects of the reform. The institutional adaptation should project openness, transparency and effectiveness. These are precisely our guiding principles while analyzing the reform of the Security Council, establishing the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council.

The reform of the Security Council is proving to be an enormously complex and divisive issue. Although necessary, it should not be conducted at the cost of compromising the Council's capacity to meet the Charter responsibilities. The Republic of Poland believes that the effectiveness and efficiency of the Security Council should be built on the assumption that membership not only grants additional privileges but also increases responsibilities.

Furthermore, Poland fully recognizes the importance of the ongoing process carried out by the Secretary General, aimed at enhancing effective management of the Organization. We would strongly encourage continuing these efforts to strengthen the United Nations' accountability and oversight mechanisms as well as the efficient use of human resources. System-wide coherence, particularly regarding the operational capabilities and humanitarian assistance should be high on the reform agenda. We do hope that such an approach will enhance Organization's capacity to confront new task and challenges thus enhancing the authority of the United Nations and its role in the international system.

Excellencies,

Poland's commitments to the United Nations are not taken on the basis of tactical considerations. We are not calculating what we can win from this or that choice. We do not expect to make political profits or economic gains. But we share a sense of solidarity and responsibility – not only for our own country, but also for the entire international community.

A system, based on the values and principles, may not be perfect, but it is likely to be more peaceful and in the long run more conducive and responsive to the peoples' needs. In this spirit, I hope that this anniversary session