

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sixty years ago, the Charter of the United Nations was adopted in San Francisco. It was an event that set the path for the future of nations and peoples. An event in which intelligence is resolutely devoted to peace and justice and willpower is forged for the common interest.

With the adoption of the Outcome Document by the Summit a process of paramount importance is set in motion, one in which you will count on the full support of the Delegation of Spain. I pay tribute to the sustained effort of your predecessor, my colleague Jean Ping, and wish to reiterate to our Secretary General my admiration for his personal and diplomatic skills.

Mr. President:

There can be no doubt: The United Nations has taken a step forward since the celebration of the Summit. We have achieved progress in essential areas. Spain is satisfied with the outcome: the importance of assisting the victims of terrorism has been highlighted. The initiative of an Alliance of Civilizations has been welcomed. The Summit has recalled the need to continue aiding middle-income countries, while supporting innovative sources of financing for the implementation of the Initiative against Hunger and Poverty.

I would like to recall here that an initiative on United Nations reform was carried in the Spanish Parliament on 13 September, urging the Government to attain a number of objectives, which are now reflected in the Outcome Document.

We have recognized that development, peace and security and human rights constitute the three basic interdependent and interrelated pillars of the United Nations system, and the foundations for collective security and well-being. In our globalized world, we can only solve international problems, new challenges and risks through a concerted action and one that is based on solidarity.

In this collective action, the fight against terrorism is an absolute priority for Spain. The General Assembly must adopt a global strategy that would include the objective of creating an International Fund for the Assistance of Victims. Furthermore, Spain has just signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and in the framework of the Sixth Committee, Spain is determined to facilitate the conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism before the end of this 60<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

Mr. President:

The Summit has stated that tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation amongst cultures, civilizations and peoples are essential elements for the promotion of international peace and security.

This is precisely the conviction that inspired the President of the Government of Spain to propose the initiative of the Alliance of Civilizations during the past General Assembly. The High Level Group of eminent personalities appointed by the Secretary General to evolve this initiative will hold its first meeting in my country this Autumn.

This initiative, co-sponsored by the President of the Government of Spain and the Prime Minister of Turkey, is today more necessary than ever. It is imperative to put an end to this negative drift in mutual perceptions that is being fomented and utilized by extremist groups.

The Alliance of Civilizations is an initiative that is eminently political, one that goes beyond the promotion of dialogue and allows for the adoption of a plan of action with concrete steps in areas such as education, media or social integration.

The Summit must give a new impetus to the fight against poverty. The Government and the people of Spain, who have shown their solidarity, are firmly committed with the Millennium Development Goals.

The Spanish Government will double the amount for Official Development Aid, to reach 0.33% of its GDP in 2006 and 0.5% in 2008, as a prior step to reaching the target of 0.7% as quickly as possible. We shall also significantly increase our contributions to Agencies, Funds and Programs of the United Nations system.

It is urgent to find innovative and additional sources of financing for development. For that reason, Spain is promoting the "Initiative against Hunger and Poverty" together with five other countries, with the aim to identify innovative and additional sources of financing for development.

In this regard, Spain actively participates in the cancellation of debt in favor of Highly Indebted Poor Countries, and is working on a plan to swap debt for public investment in key areas for human development in Latin American countries.

Mr. President:

Let me reiterate once more Spain's firm commitment with peacekeeping operations, which translates into substantial contributions of our Armed and Security Forces deployed wherever needed under Security Council mandate, especially in the Balkans, Haiti and Afghanistan.

I would like to underline before this General Assembly the high degree of commitment and professionalism shown by Spanish contingents and to recall with pride those who have sacrificed their lives for international peace and security.

The creation of a Peace Building Commission is another achievement of this Summit. Spain, as an important contributor to the United Nations budget and to its peacekeeping operations, is ready actively to participate in the work of this Commission.

Since its inception this Organization has been determined to provide the International Community with a legally binding framework for the protection and promotion of human rights.

Spain shares this purpose and is committed fully to implement the international legal instruments in this area. We have deepened our cooperation with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and we have increased our contribution to its budget.

We are also pleased with the establishment of a Council of Human Rights, and are fully prepared actively to contribute to the work of this new body.

Over the past year, important legislative developments have occurred in my country, and we have taken significant steps in order to promote effective equality among all citizens in areas such as gender violence and for the end of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. The Government has also tackled the situation of immigrant workers through the implementation of a wide regularization process.

We firmly support the reform process that will allow the strengthening of the effectiveness of the United Nations bodies and that will ensure the effective implementation of its resolutions. It will hardly be of use to improve the existing structures if the decisions adopted are not carried through. The United Nations must regain its credibility. We believe that the reform, and very much in particular that of the Security Council, must be the result of the broadest agreement amongst all of us. A reformed structure with a greater representation, democratization, effectiveness and transparency calls for a Secretariat that is strengthened in its operation and management.

I agree with the Secretary General that our greatest failure has to do with non-proliferation and disarmament. For Spain, nuclear proliferation represents a grave risk for international peace and security. We are concerned about the illicit trade of small and light weapons and we support the preparation of an International Treaty on Arm Trade.

Mr. President:

I cannot but mention, again this year, the question of Gibraltar, and the need to put an end to this dispute through the implementation of the repeated mandates of this General Assembly that have urged Spain and the United Kingdom to continue their bilateral negotiations, with a view to completing the decolonization process, in accordance with the pertinent United Nations resolutions. Spain is willing to work in a constructive spirit. This spirit is reflected in the

creation of a Trilateral Dialogue Forum whose aim is to produce an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation for the benefit and prosperity of Gibraltar and of the surrounding areas.

Mr. President:

I would like now to address certain issues in the international agenda, in which my country is particularly interested.

Next month, Spain will host the XV Ibero-American Summit in Salamanca. It will be a meeting that will constitute a turning point in the creation of a true Ibero-American space, with the institutionalization of its Secretariat and a stronger will further to contribute towards an effective multilateralism.

Spain pays particular attention to its relations with its neighbors in the Maghreb region. Through an active and comprehensive policy, Spain wishes to reinforce its cooperation with those countries, firmly supporting political stability, respect for human rights and those reforms that are put into place to consolidate democracy and its economic and social development.

In this regard, Spain firmly believes that the Western Sahara conflict that has lasted for almost thirty years requires priority attention. The International Community must contribute to overcome the stalemate and offer a political, just and definitive solution within the framework of the United Nations and in accordance with international law. To that end, Spain develops an active diplomacy and believes that steps taken, such as the recent appointments by the Secretary General of his Personal Envoy and of the Special Representative for MINURSO, open the opportunity to relaunch the process.

In the Middle East, the disengagement from Gaza carried out by the Israeli Government wisely and with great effectiveness, may constitute a powerful driving force in the Peace Process. It is only right to congratulate the Government of Israel for its decision. I also extend my congratulations to the Palestinian National Authority for having significantly contributed for the entire operation to be completed in a peaceful manner. Now that the disengagement has been satisfactorily completed, the Road Map must become again a central framework for the Peace Process.

The time has arrived to increase our aid to Africa and to support African countries in their efforts towards integration, peace and progress. In addition to increasing its Official Development Aid, Spain also considers it a priority to promote the definitive resolution of conflicts that still devastate the African continent.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Summit Outcome Document constitutes a good starting point to continue working towards achieving the agreements that still elude us. We cannot allow inaction, lack of ambition or shortsightedness to prevent the successful conclusion of the task ahead.

Sixty years ago, the signatories of the Charter of the United Nations translated into an agreement a thought that was as solid as it was simple: we can either walk together towards peace or we will never find it. A year ago, the President of the Spanish Government recalled before this Assembly that the history of humanity does not give us many reasons to be optimistic. Let us work with imagination and commitment to turn this Organization into an expression of common wills, an organization legitimized by its effectiveness and its universal character. Let us work so that some day we will feel proud as human beings.

We are the United Nations and the peoples of the world expect us to act as such in the face of the challenges and opportunities afforded to us in these times of change.

Thank you, Mr. President.