



**MISSIÓ PERMANENT
DEL PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA
A LES NACIONS UNIDES**

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DISCURSO DEL EXCMO. SR. DON ALBERT PINTAT
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STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. ALBERT PINTAT
PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF ANDORRA.

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*Vérifier à l'audition
Check against delineo,*

Before I begin, I would like to express, on behalf of all of the people of the Principality of Andorra, our sympathy for and solidarity with those people who have suffered due to the recent hurricane on America's Gulf coast.

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary General,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year is the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations. It is also the sixtieth anniversary of the events at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the terrible aftershock of the cataclysm of the Atomic bomb, a terrifying truth was revealed - that with every technological leap forward, greater and more terrible dangers arise. The world recognized the need for the United Nations, not only as a means of curbing the dangers of our modern world, but also as a forum for reflection.

It is with the greatest respect and hope that I appear here today to address the United Nations. For in today's world, a telephone call or an interne message can take us to the farthest reaches of the planet in a split second. Today, in fact, it can be said that we are all each others' neighbours. Any war, wherever it may be taking place, can affect us all directly, just the same as a natural disaster can plunge the world economy into turmoil. We are witnessing the birth of a global sensibility, measured in terms of an ethical sense of fair play, of decency and of solidarity that transcends national borders, languages and even religions. Like it or not, fear it or accept it, we are all gradually merging into a single entity. Will we live in a world where human rights are universally recognized? Where a decent standard of living is enjoyed by all citizens? Where medical care is available not only to a wealthy elite but to everyone in need? And where education is prized as the foundation of spiritual well-being? Or will we be rent by divisiveness, war, terror, misery, and ignorance?

Smaller states are in the majority amongst the members of the United Nations, and this place gives us a forum in which our voices may be heard. I say may be heard, since it is true that globalized media increasingly controls the dissemination of information. This makes the United Nations all the more valuable as a place in which original and courageous ideas can be proposed.

Many smaller countries share a rejection of isolationism. We know that the borders that define us are close by - we know and trust our neighbors. And thus for smaller countries, the interconnected nature of the global community comes as no surprise. Multilateralism is essential in today's world. It is for this very reason that we must all support institutions such as the International Criminal Court. In these uncertain times, at the beginning of a new chapter in history, we must all commit ourselves to multilateralism as a means of guaranteeing a safer and more just world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Excellencies,

There is much talk about the reform of the United Nations. I embrace the concept of reform. Who can be against the improvement of such a vital institution at a time when the world so greatly requires its vision and mission to preserve peace?

At the same time, I would like to underscore all of those parts that make up the United Nations that have made such significant contributions over the last half century. UNICEF, FAO, WHO – all have made our world a better place. It is remarkable that the United Nations has accomplished so much with limited resources. Of course, much more work remains to be done. Rather than focusing obsessively on the abstract issue of "the reform", let us deal, head-on, with the problems of refugees, disease and political turmoil. We must never forget how much we can accomplish even with this imperfect instrument, or with our unique position as a global institution.

We strongly support Kofi Annan in his proposed reforms. We believe, like him, that these reforms will enhance the credibility of the organisation and good governance within it, as well as its transparency.

One of the great achievements of the UN was the universal charter of human rights in 1948, and we must now support the creation of a council with powers to reinforce the implementation of human rights. Education must also become our priority : it is without a doubt one of the essential elements that are necessary to promote human rights, and one of the most effective tools for the development of states.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Excellencies,

Andorra also supports the gradual implementation of the millennium development goals. These goals were agreed on in a summit in 2000 of over one hundred and seventy presidents and prime ministers. At that summit, we committed ourselves to act, not simply to mouth empty words. While some aspects of these goals may be difficult to put into practice, and we are fully aware of the challenges involved in devoting a portion of our GNP to development assistance, we also recognize that the alternatives are indeed bleak.

In this globalized and interconnected world, geographic barriers no longer protect us, nor can developed countries ignore the hardships suffered in the less developed world. It is not enough just to recognize the need for social justice – words must be followed by deeds. If we do not act, social unrest, war and terrorism will reach all shores.

The unjustifiable acts of terrorism in New York, Madrid and London; the genocide in Rwanda; recent wars and conflicts - all of these events have deeply troubled the world community. And yet there is still hope, still reason for optimism.

In a famous meditation written over four hundred years ago, the Englishman John Donne wrote, "No man is an island, entire of himself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

But perhaps we can turn his question around and meditate on life. What is the nature of the life that binds us all? To fight hunger, AIDS, terrorism, and abject poverty, to struggle for a sense of common justice, for education, for gender equality: these are the goals and dreams that link us to one another. To struggle on towards them is to live as a human being, and ensure the certainty of a better tomorrow. Ladies and Gentlemen, let us choose life together, and struggle onwards, united under the blue flag of hope of the United Nations.

Thank-you very much.