



# CROATIA

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**Statement by**

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President of the Republic of Croatia**

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Mr. Chairman,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Distinguished Presidents, Prime Ministers and Ministers,  
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Today, sixty years after our predecessors established this unique organization, whose programme is already suggested by its very name, United Nations, we can face one another as their successors and say contentedly: we have succeeded.

At the same time, however, sixty decades after the establishment of the United Nations, we must face one another with a sense of bitter reality and say: we have failed.

Both are true.

Both statements speak about the world over the past period, but most of all about ourselves - because it has often been said, with good reason, that the United Nations are as good as their member states. Of course, these states determine by their behaviour the world in which we live. It is an indisputable fact that the world which founded the United Nations was united much more than the present world.

That was a world united by a common goal, the opposition to the ideology and practice of fascism and Nazism, a world determined to prevent any repetition of the horrors of aggressive wars and of the Holocaust, the full truth of which had just begun to reach the public.

Our organization was founded at the end of the so far largest conflict in the history of humankind. It was founded with the noble intention, as stated in its Charter, to save future generations from the atrocities of war. This is precisely the first element which provides the grounds for my initial statements. Yes, we have preserved peace on the global scale, there has been no new world war, and to that extent we have been successful. But we have not been able to save the world and humankind from a long string of cruel and bloody wars, and in that context we have undeniably failed.

The principles of freedom, national and individual freedom, and of equality in international relations were some of the priorities of the new world which was being built. The development issue and the overcoming of the ever larger gap between the developed and the underdeveloped have been on the agenda of the General Assembly on a number of occasions. We have also discussed terrorism - to be true, mainly with the kind subsumed under state terrorism. Lacking the strength to prevent them, we have endeavoured to heal the consequences of wars and armed conflicts. The results in all these efforts have been incomplete, partial; we have achieved progress, but no issue has been dealt with conclusively.

Our current tasks were formulated very well at the millennial meeting five years ago. On behalf of the Republic of Croatia I welcome the Declaration on the

Achievement of the Millennium Goals. Although it does not fully conform to its original intent, the Declaration testifies to the prevailing mood of supporting the goals and tasks which have been identified as key and imperative issues.

This still leaves the fact, however, that we have partly succeeded but also partly failed with respect to the basic principles governing relations on the international scene, the development of the underdeveloped, and armed conflicts and terrorism. Thus, if today, after sixty years, we must answer the question "May we *be satisfied?*", the only honest answer reads: *only partly*.

What, in that case, are we to do? First of all, our organization — imperfect but irreplaceable, underefficient but imperative, sometimes deliberately marginalized but, luckily, never fully relegated to the background — must become the reflection and the expression of our world, an organization capable of tackling its problems vigorously and efficiently.

The United Nations must be reformed.

There is no alternative to that, and this should be clear to everyone who wants this organization to play the role envisioned by its founders. The Republic of Croatia is the successor to one of the founding countries of the United Nations, and my country cherishes the sublime ideals governing the founders of the organization.

The key agencies of the United Nations in general and their structure in particular reflect the world at the end of the Second World War, a world which no longer exists.

This calls for a change.

The United Nations I have in mind must reflect the world in which we live today and even anticipate the world of tomorrow.

Can we be unanimous in this — let me stress this point again — imperative reform? I do not think so.

Should that deter us from reform? On no account.

Let me be completely clear: the concept of reform must proceed from current reality, it must consider the foreseeable trend of future development and, most importantly, it must be acceptable to a convincing majority of the members of our global organization.

This is our organization and we are the ones it should serve.

The majority in this organization is against war and for peace, against force and the use of force and for negotiation and peaceful settlement of issues, against poverty, falling behind and underdevelopment and for global development and prosperity, against all forms of terrorism and for the security of states and citizens, against discrimination and intolerance of any kind and for equality and recognition of diversity, against the sacrificing of our environment to fast profit and for the preservation of the plant and animal world, the basis of life on our planet.

The United Nations must become qualified to achieve these goals. The organization must draw its strength from our firm commitment to building a world which will not only be better than the world of sixty years ago, but even better than our current world. It must never become a mere trimming on the international scene. Even more importantly, it must never become a screen providing legitimacy to any policy clearly opposed to the mood of the majority, our mood, the mood of the nations and states united in the effort to build a better future world.

Nevertheless, in spite of this only partial success, we have achieved a lot. We are now faced with a question which calls for an answer by deeds rather than words: can we be united in order to survive, in order to literally save our world for future generations?

I hope and believe that we shall have the strength and the wisdom for an affirmative answer to this question.

We owe it to the founders of the United Nations but also to our children and to the children of our children.

We must not betray either.

Thank you!