



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

STATEMENT

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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

It is a privilege and honor to address this distinguished audience on behalf of Bulgaria, particularly when my country celebrates the **centennial anniversary of the proclamation of its independence**. Throughout this century Bulgaria asserted and safeguarded its independence often through active participation in international organizations, including the United Nations. As a recent member of the EU, my country is now even more committed to the universal and regulatory role of the UN in today's globalized world. We align ourselves with the statement made by President Sarkozy of the French Republic on behalf of the EU.

May I, Mr. President, congratulate you on the assumption of the Presidency of this 63rd session of the General Assembly and to wish you every success in the months ahead and pledge our full support to your endeavors.

Our deep gratitude goes to **H.E. Dr. Srgjan Kerim**, for his able guidance of the previous session.

Mr. President,

Given the growing urgency of **food security**, the topic we discuss today is of crucial importance. We fully support the UN-led efforts, reflected in the Rome Declaration, to ensure a timely response to a problem that may have grave consequences for the livelihood of millions of people.

Food security is a cross cutting issue that should be considered against the background of other interrelated global challenges, such as **climate change** and **energy security**. They also demand an immediate response based on the common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities of different countries. The UN should continue to offer the unique forum for the elaboration of the needed effective multilateral approach.

Next spring Bulgaria intends to host a Summit entitled: **Gas for Europe: a New Transregional Partnerships and Projects**". It is important to bring together heads of state and government from all interested countries in South East Europe, Black Sea and Caspian Region, Central Asia, the EU and the US in order to encourage the political dialogue at the highest level and to enhance transregional cooperation with a view to reach a balance of energy and other strategic interests.

Mr. President,

Effective multilateralism requires an intensive **partnership between UN and regional organizations**. On the basis of the UN-EU Joint Declaration on co-operation in crisis management, the EU and the UN have engaged in partnerships that has already delivered results in many areas of peacemaking and peacebuilding. Good and pragmatic relationship between the UN and NATO in the Western Balkans, Afghanistan and Africa is also of crucial importance.

Different forms of regional, subregional and transborder cooperation may serve as building blocks of a comprehensive collective security system. Peace and stability are well-rooted when local communities and immediate neighbors live in harmony. This philosophy guided the recent Bulgarian chairmanship of the South East European Cooperation Process. Regional cooperation in **South East Europe** has gained momentum recently. South East Europe is on

its way to turn from an area recovering from war to a thriving and dynamic region. In the last twelve months a whole new architecture of interaction came into being, connecting the countries of the region to the rest of Europe and the international community. In line with the concept of “regional ownership” the pivotal role is now assumed by the new Regional Cooperation Council.

The framework of regional cooperation should involve **Kosovo** as well. EULEX has a key role to play there, and we welcome the progress achieved in harmonizing relations with UNMIK in the course of the latter’s reconfiguration. We look forward to the full operational development of the EU mission in the entire Kosovo.

Democracy, security and cooperation still have their further way to go in the **Black Sea region**. More coherent efforts are needed for the ultimate settlement of the protracted conflicts there. Frozen conflicts should not be neglected because they tend to re-ignite tension time and again. Recent armed hostilities in **South Ossetia** and in other parts of Georgia provided ample evidence to that effect. Bulgaria rendered its full support for the peacemaking mission of the French EU Presidency and remains actively involved in the preparation of the EU Monitoring Mission. We are convinced that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia should be upheld and the military contingents should be withdrawn to their positions prior to the conflict, to allow effective EU and OSCE monitoring of the implementation of the Six Points plan and subsequent agreements.

Bulgaria contributes fully to the Eastern Dimension of the European Neighborhood policy which should address the needs and priorities of all the partners in the region. We see opportunities for launching projects in important sectors such as transport, trade, energy, environment, border security. **The EU Black Sea Synergy** is a pragmatic way of intertwining various regional initiatives, thus multiplying their effect.

Mr. President,

The UN reform in the field of peacemaking brings into life new formats, such as regional conflict prevention centers designed to enhance the UN potential to mediate peaceful solutions to violent conflicts. Should the plans for a **regional centre for UN mediation in the Western Balkans/Black Sea area** meet approval by member states, Bulgaria stands ready to host it in Sofia, and to facilitate in every possible way its activities in the South East Europe, in the South Caucasus and other neighboring areas.

As prevention and development are inextricably linked, the Bulgarian government and the UNDP country office currently explore the potential for **a Bulgaria/UNDP Regional Hub for the Western Balkans and the Black Sea Area** to spread accumulated know-how, training and research.

Mr. President,

Disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as strengthening of the international treaty system should be a priority to all states, as the list of risks and challenges to our common security is, regrettably, a very long one. In this regard, the need for a full and universal implementation of the Non-proliferation Treaty regime is, and must remain, of utmost importance. The same is true for the full implementation of the UN Program of Action against the Illicit Trade in **Small Arms and Light Weapons**. We are strongly committed to working for the adoption of a legally binding international Arms Trade Treaty.

We condemn unequivocally **terrorism and reject terrorist ideology** in all its forms and manifestations. The recently held first review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy proved that the UN should continue to play a central role in mobilizing the international community to counter terrorism and all related phenomena, such as radicalization and extremism.

When countering terrorism it is essential to conduct that struggle within the requirements of international law, to overcome prejudices, stereotype perceptions in a world of great diversity. Bulgaria's long history of tolerance has been based on the common understanding that cultural diversity is a great asset in our society. It is in this spirit Bulgaria actively participates in the UN **Alliance of Civilizations** and supports other like-minded initiatives.

Mr. President,

This year we mark the 60th anniversary of **UN peacekeeping operations**. As we pay tribute to the six decades of promoting peace and protecting the vulnerable, we should also realize that still there is much more to be done. The UN is facing a serious challenge due to the complex and multidimensional character of a growing number of peace operations and missions.

Bulgaria continues to make its **contribution to the international peacekeeping efforts** in the Western Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa. We believe that the Middle East peace process, re-invigorated in Annapolis, should expeditiously bring the long awaited comprehensive settlement. All the more that the launch of **the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean** provided a better regional environment and a stronger incentive to achieve peace in the Middle East.

Our task today is not only to keep the peace – we must also make certain that peace is irreversible and sustainable. The **Peacebuilding Commission**, an early achievement of the reform process, has now become functional and has achieved some practical results in Burundi and Sierra Leone.

Global celebrations of the 60th anniversary this year of the Universal Declaration of **Human Rights** have reaffirmed the critical importance of universal adherence to international human rights standards, the realization of which would make the world better for us all, free of poverty, intolerance and discrimination. Despite the progress achieved, we should never relent in our efforts. The Human Rights Council, with its institution-building process successfully accomplished, should engage in constructive, all-inclusive work aimed at promoting and guaranteeing “all human rights for all”.

Mr. President,

Stable peace and security can only be achieved through development. Therefore there is an urgent need to accelerate the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including **the Millennium Development Goals**. We are convinced that the responsibility for the timely achievement of these goals lies within both developed and developing countries.

Solidarity with those in need and, in particular, **with the developing countries** is an important and irrevocable principle of Bulgarian foreign policy. We are making our first steps in building a new donor capacity and shall strive to achieve the targeted levels of official development assistance as part of the EU development cooperation policy.

Mr. President,

In order to perform efficiently its role in the world, the UN must follow persistently the **course of reforms**, initiated by the 2005 World Summit. We welcome the progress achieved during the 62nd session of the General Assembly for improving the working modalities of the main UN bodies. Bulgaria expects that the remaining tasks on the UN reform agenda will be pursued vigorously and without delay during the current session.

It is in our common interest to ensure that this 63rd session of the General Assembly will achieve tangible results.

Thank you.