



ITALY

STATEMENT BY
THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AND
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE HONOURABLE
FRANCO FRATTINI

TO THE 63rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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Mr. President,

I wish to express my warmest congratulations on your election to the presidency of the 63rd session of the General Assembly, which will be ably guided thanks to your international experience and special sensitivity to social issues.

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,

Today we face the reality of an international system, becoming more complex by the day. Globalization has created new opportunities. It has also produced uncertainty and insecurity. Sudden crises affect the fundamental sources of our sustenance and progress: food, energy, and financial resources.

Terrorism and nuclear proliferation threaten our security. Climate change has an impact on the future of our planet. Growing instability characterizes energy and financial markets, widening the gap between rich and poor. These global challenges demand a timely political response. A national response would be inadequate and illusory. The right response can only be global and cooperative.

A dramatic new vision of global governance for the 21st century requires rules that all nations can embrace. A new vision based on three principles: inclusiveness, effectiveness, and shared responsibility.

Effective global governance means a central role for the United Nations, starting with its most representative, democratic body, the General Assembly. Effective global governance means a strong connection between the United Nations and international organizations, either universal or regional, such as the European Union and the African Union. Effective global governance means a comprehensive and consensual reform of the UN system, including the Security Council. To achieve a reform of this magnitude, on the foundations of strong political support, there is no alternative to general consensus.

We must immediately learn the lesson of the turmoil in the world financial markets. Promoting transparent and reliable rules is the only way to protect our societies from falling prey to these events. We have to avoid squandering wealth and assure instead that it is distributed equitably among every component of society.

This is the vision that Italy will promote during its Presidency of the G8. Through a broader dialogue with the emerging economies and the least developed Countries, the G8 will contribute to the shaping of a new system of global governance in which formats will be tailored on specific issues leading to a gradual assumption of shared responsibility.

Mr. President,

The Millennium Development Goals are priority challenges. They demand an urgent response, greater human and financial resources, new ideas, and a true partnership between donor and beneficiary Countries that is fully inclusive of governments, local organizations, the private sector, and civil society.

Italy is strongly committed to achieving the goals of defeating hunger, strengthening health-care systems, and making education accessible to all. All this is on the agenda of the Italian Presidency of the G8 Presidency. Africa will be at the center of our attention.

The right place to address the food crisis is the United Nations. We must enable the Organization to tackle it effectively. Italy strongly supports the role and function of the FAO, WFP, IFAD, and all the Agencies that help to alleviate hunger and guarantee food security. We also encourage a direct involvement of the private sector in bringing agriculture back to its rightful place at the center of economic policies. A global partnership that will increase the flow of investments and know-how, increase productivity, and contribute to the development of national agro-industry. A global partnership that will make a big step toward achieving the first Millennium Development Goal: to eliminate poverty and hunger and improve the lives of "the last billion," that portion of the global population still on the margins of the world economy. This is an absolute priority.

2009 will be a crucial year for the international negotiations on climate change. Italy and the European Union are determined to reach an ambitious post-2012 agreement that includes mitigation and adaptation measures.

The fight against climate change is closely connected to energy security. We need to promote greater energy cooperation at the global level. We need to promote solutions that reconcile the need for secure supplies with sustainable energy policies, energy efficiency, and clean energy technologies. We need to promote research and development of alternative fuels sources, including renewable and nuclear energy. We need to promote a comprehensive dialogue between producing and consuming Countries, based on mutual trust, solidarity, dialogue and cooperation.

Interdependence is the fundamental reality that binds developed Countries and emerging economies. And in its capacity as G8 President, Italy will promote the energy dialogue and the global negotiation on climate change.

Mr. President,

Effective multilateral cooperation built on shared responsibility is vital to tackling the main threats to our safety and security, including terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Our vigilance against terrorism must remain high and our international cooperation intense. In the next few years we should work together on a new global pact against terrorism to be enacted in 2011 on the tenth anniversary of the tragic events of September 11th. The protection of human rights and rule of law must underpin our action. These values are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is as relevant today as it was sixty years ago. This is why Italy has a long-standing commitment to a universal moratorium on the death penalty, with a view to its abolition. And this is also why we are working to combat impunity and strengthen the instruments of international law, including the International Criminal Court.

The fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is at the center of our international commitment. In preparation for the NPT Review Conference of 2010, Italy is ready to do its part to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is of fundamental importance to preventing and countering proliferation and laying the foundations for a world free of nuclear weapons. Yet we must also maintain cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear technology, as expressly provided for by the Treaty. We thus call upon the Iranian Government to show the highest sense of responsibility by promptly meeting the conditions for a normal negotiation to reassure the international community and the countries of the region.

Mr. President,

Global security and regional security are closely connected. We welcome the positive signals from the Middle East: the progress of the negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians; the beginning of a national dialogue between the Lebanese political forces to fully implement the Doha agreements; and the new chapter in relations between Lebanon and Syria. In Afghanistan the continuation of the international commitment should be accompanied by a gradual assumption of responsibility by the local authorities and forces and the participation of neighboring countries in the stabilization process. In the Caucasus, the recent crisis indicates the need, there and elsewhere, to strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms and prevent a competitive dynamic that would lead to high costs and low benefits.

Mr. President,

More than two hundred years ago the great Italian political philosopher Cesare Beccaria wrote, "The greatest happiness of the greatest number is the foundation of morals and legislation." True to these words, so deeply rooted in my Country's democratic vocation, Italy joins in the common effort to build a world of peace, security, sustainable development and a new democratic, transparent and effective global governance.

Thank you, Mr. President.