



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Željko Komšić

**Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Head of Delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
at 64. Session of the General Assembly**

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**SPEECH BY H.E. MR. ŽELJKO KOMŠIĆ,
CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDENCY OF
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AT THE
GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 64TH SESSION
OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, September 24, 2009

**Mr. President, Mr. Secretary General, Your
Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great honor to address the General Assembly today in the capacity of the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the very outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, as well as members of the Bureau of the 64th Session of the General Assembly, on your election as Chairman, and to express our full support to your future work. Furthermore I would like to congratulate H.E. President Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, whom I met on several occasions, on the results achieved during his presiding over the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly, in a time when this body and the international community in general were facing an array of challenges related to pressing global issues.

Sessions of the UN General Assembly have always served as opportunities for leaders of states to gather and exchange their opinion about the situation in the world with the aim of finding the most suitable solutions for current global issues.

The United Nations, as well as other organizations, depends upon the collective strength of its members, and the strength needs to be based on the consensus of member states.

One of the most pressing issues that marked the last year is the global economic and financial crisis, which has become the biggest threat to global peace and stability. If we miss the opportunity to tackle its negative effects immediately, it could produce unimaginable

consequences in the entire world. Even though there are indicators which show that recession in developed countries is slowly abating, it is evident that recuperation will be slow and time-consuming. In regards to the developing and less developed countries, we can only imagine the harmful consequences this crisis could produce in the times ahead. It is more than obvious that countries cannot combat this crisis on their own, regardless of the efficiency of their government. Global crisis requires global solutions. We welcome the adoption of Outcome Document No. 63/303 which is a result of the recently held High Level Conference on the Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development. This Conference confirmed once again that the role of the United Nations, and especially of the General Assembly, being one of the most democratic forums, is to lead this process and find new modalities for improvement of cooperation, with the aim of establishing efficient crisis prevention mechanisms, means for alleviating and eliminating its consequences, as well as for eradicating poverty and establishing social justice in the world.

It would be justified to say that this most severe global economic crisis since the establishing of the World Organization has heavily compromised and even jeopardized the realization of the Millennium Development Goals as one of the noblest tasks set by the World Organization since its foundation. This particularly applies to the poorest countries and especially to the counties of sub-Saharan Africa that had failed to achieve positive results even before the onset of the crisis. I have to underline that, beside the responsibility these countries have pertaining to their activities in establishing good management and rule of law, which are prerequisites for achieving the above-mentioned development goals, a huge responsibility lies with developed countries. It is exactly the developed countries that are expected to do all in their power in order to overcome the global economic crisis. We think that

during a crisis it is necessary to reform the global financial system and to make it more transparent, to develop mechanisms for market monitoring and thus to avoid the mistakes that occurred in the period prior to the current global GDP decrease.

BiH State Institutions have made systematic efforts to accomplish the Millennium Development Goals, and we believe that other than the difficulties caused by global economic volatility, there will possibly be no other obstacles in the context of finalizing the defined tasks by the year 2015. At the moment Bosnia and Herzegovina is preparing a development strategy, as well as a social inclusion strategy. The strategy on the fight against poverty has been previously drafted and implemented. Such projects have been carried out in cooperation with relevant UN agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I would like to use this opportunity to extend my gratitude for their intensive cooperation.

Mr. President,

Climate changes are one of the key issues that require an urgent response of the international community. BiH aspires to end the year 2009 with successful completion of international negotiations on climate changes. Furthermore, we hope that the Copenhagen Summit will produce an agreement which outpaces the Kyoto protocol and that it will gain support of all UN member states.

However, it is not only island countries that are affected by this problem; it is rather a universal challenge and threat. Humanitarian catastrophes caused by weather conditions that afflicted a part of our planet in the past years need to serve as a warning to all of us. Neither economic nor political interests must obstruct the achievement of a global consensus as a true beginning of a global struggle for prevention of the loss of the natural balance of our planet.

Mr. President,

All of us who gathered here today agree that continuous and comprehensive reform of the United Nations system is necessary, and that it ought to be completed in a careful, prudent manner ensuring the broadest consensus of member states. The reform of the United Nations should result in efficient and coordinated functioning of all organs and bodies of the system, but a widely accepted perspective is that the reform of the Security Council is of key importance for substantive reform of the entire system of the World Organization.

I am convinced that the majority agrees with me that the reform of the Security Council primarily ought to result in better transparency of this organ and its activities, and should provide a considerably larger spectrum for non-member states to participate in its work. This particularly applies to countries that are mostly on the Council's agenda, countries that are directly affected by a certain crisis, as well as countries that could use their expertise or experience they gained in similar situations to contribute to finding the best and most acceptable solutions. We all have to be aware of the fact that any further delay in the reform of the Security Council will undermine credibility of this body, whereas the willingness to reach a compromise must be an imperative.

Dialogue and compromise are the only way to ensure the broadest possible support for reforms, and Bosnia and Herzegovina is of the opinion that the Security Council reform should be urgently commenced. In any case, we believe that in the future reformed Security Council, a group of countries from Eastern Europe must have another non-permanent seat, taking into consideration the fact that the number of countries from this group has more than doubled in the last two decades.

I would like to emphasize that I expect the Council's stronger engagement in preventive diplomacy. We believe that taking this new course of action would mean that solutions for many issues and

crises could be solved before their aggravation, thus increasing the efficiency of this body. Ensuring a timely and efficient prevention of conflict, rather than reacting once the crisis has already escalated, is a more efficient and less expensive method for preserving peace and security.

Unfortunately, armed conflicts remain a reality of our world whereby the most jeopardized and poorest peoples and nations are left to fend for themselves. Therefore it is necessary to additionally foster UN early warning mechanisms and establish multiple sources of informing, in order to create a real image of the situation and simultaneously strengthen countries' ability to resist incitements that lead to genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Bosnia and Herzegovina remains committed to full cooperation with ICTY, since those indicted for war crimes in former Yugoslavia have to be prosecuted. Meanwhile a legal framework has been set up in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina has begun the prosecution of war crimes, which is one of requirements for building a mutual confidence and reconciliation in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. President,

The number of refugees has been increasing every day around the globe, but there is less strength and fewer means used for finding a concrete solution to this global issue. People in Bosnia and Herzegovina are well acquainted with the destiny, pain and suffering of refugees. Therefore we urge for maximum effort in order to systematically resolve the global refugee crisis. In this respect, we support the joint and continued endeavor of all UN agencies and the non-governmental sector that directly deal with this problem, and we are willing to offer cooperation in every aspect.

With regards to UN peacekeeping missions we believe that with the benefit of foresight, considering the best practice

and lessons learned, we ought to do our best to make them more efficient. Bosnia and Herzegovina will support every initiative that can improve the efficiency of the global UN peacekeeping mission. Hence, we believe that it is crucial to pay special attention to personnel selection for each geographic and cultural area and engage as many people as possible from the diasporas who come from that particular area and who can offer the most, given their knowledge of the customs and culture of the relevant area. We would like to underline the importance of defining the peacekeeping missions' exit strategy being under the aegis of the United Nations. A clear exit strategy must be backed by proper assessment of the situation in the field, valid assessment of the peace building processes and their entering into a permanent, irreversible phase, as well as the wider regional and sub-regional context. We must not allow for short-term assessment to prevail and lead to premature cessation of missions.

Due to its own experience, Bosnia and Herzegovina thinks that the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council, needs to be further engaged in preventive diplomacy. A timely reaction, preventing aggravation of the crisis and its transformation into open conflicts, ought to be the prime concern of their work and activities in the field. The initiative and active participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Alliance of Civilizations contributes to such modus operandi.

I have the honor to inform you about the First Balkan Regional Conference that will be held within the framework of the Alliance of Civilizations in Sarajevo at the end of this year. A special emphasis is put on regional and sub-regional cooperation and dialogue among various cultures and traditions that have coexisted in the Balkans for centuries.

We are willing to share both our positive and negative experience pertaining to the post-conflict, peace-building aspect. Bosnia and Herzegovina is of the opinion that each crisis has to be carefully

examined, whereby it is necessary to take into consideration all its causes, if we are to find a sustainable and justifiable solution. We believe that there are no universal solutions applicable to every crisis, so each particular case requires our full attention.

Mr. President,

Foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina is directed to preservation and improvement of long-lasting peace, security and stability of democratic and comprehensive social development and contribution to international peace and stability.

The presence and participation of small countries in activities and the decision-making process of the UN Security Council is of high importance to maintaining balance within the Council. However, apart from permanent members and world powers, it needs to encourage smaller countries to present their views and participate in the decision-making process of this body, which in a way represents "global government". This was one of the reasons why, after careful consideration, and for the first time in our history, we decided to run for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council 2010/2011. Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has been the main topic of numerous debates of the international community, today wants to have capacities and actively participate and contribute to the work of the Security Council. Being a small but multi-ethnic, multi-national and multi-confessional country with a rich historic heritage, Bosnia and Herzegovina is conversant with a plethora of socio-political systems and cultural and historical context. Bosnia and Herzegovina is willing to share its experience in building peace in a post-conflict situation, particularly in the area of fostering confidence among multicultural communities, and thus actively contribute to a better understanding and long-term reconciliation in such regions. Today, Bosnia and Herzegovina actively participates in the work of international

organizations, especially in the work of the United Nations. It has been a member of the Human Rights Council since June 2007, and within the Council's framework has been working on promotion and protection of human rights throughout the world. Since 2000, members of the armed forces and police forces from Bosnia and Herzegovina have been an egalitarian participant in UN international military and police missions in Democratic Republic Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Liberia, Sudan, East Timor, Cyprus and Haiti, thus contributing to preservation of peace and stability. Furthermore, it supports international efforts to stabilize situations in Iraq and Africa.

Finding a solution to the Middle East crisis remains one of the priorities of the world organization. We believe that a positive momentum ought to be used in the best possible manner in order to establish equitable and comprehensive peace in this region. After so many years of suffering, spilt blood, tensions and mutual misunderstanding and conflicts, we must support the latest activities of The Quartet members, as well as other regional initiatives, aimed at making the crucial step forward leading to sustainable peace, which implies creation of a sovereign, independent and self-sustainable Palestinian state.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been closely following the situation in Africa. We expect that despite the hard-hitting global economic crisis, the world's most developed countries will continue to increase their GNP percentage as a contribution to ODA (Official Development Assistance), as well as the other expertise necessary for strengthening the capacities of poor African countries. Therefore we welcome efforts that the United Nations exert through the New Partnership for Africa's Development - NEPAD, aiming at leading Africa to a stable and sustainable development as well as fulfillment of Millennium Development Goals. This particularly relates to Sub-Saharan countries. We support efforts of the African Union, African governments, UN (through

UNOWA- United Nations Office for West Africa and other regional initiatives) designed to improve rule of law, democracy and strengthen capacities of civil society and institutions, and so consequently upgrade the level of all aspects of social life. We underline the importance of continued providing of material aid for Africa, as well as improving the use of these resources for the purpose of sustainable development.

Nowadays, when political and social processes are more dynamic than ever, when we are facing the challenges quite opposite from those we faced several decades ago, it becomes more than obvious that only a strong, multilateral approach can provide the right answers. The United Nations has faced numerous challenges but has always been and remained the only path and direction leading to a better future and the only organization that is able to offer adequate solutions to the array of global issues we are facing. If we work together to implement the conclusions that we reach here at this high-level event, we will undoubtedly live in better and more equitable conditions than today.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is willing to fully contribute to the work of the United Nations and I would like to express my gratitude to all member states who supported and who are willing to elect my country as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

Thank you, Mr. President.