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Statement by

**H.E. Mr. Stjepan Mesić
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**Address by the President of the Republic of Croatia,
Mr Stjepan Mesić,
at the UN General Assembly
New York, 24 September 2009**

Mr President of the General Assembly,
Mr Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Your Majesties, Honourable Presidents, Prime Ministers and Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have assembled once again to discuss the situation in the world, outline the problems our countries are facing and present our views on the world we live in. The President of the General Assembly has offered a topic for discussion, one which – I would say – perfectly reflects current circumstances and tasks arising from them.

What kind of world are we discussing here? A globalised world – by all means. An interconnected and interdependent world – without any doubt. A world of great discrepancies and major threats – certainly. In brief: our world is such that there are practically no longer regional problems and crises since each and every issue – no matter how much it may appear to be regional – shows itself as global in terms of its consequences.

Our world is still dominated by developed and most developed countries, while developing countries are desperately lagging behind, struggling with hunger, the inability to educate their citizens and a lack of even the most basic health care.

Can we be content with such a world? Without any hesitation I respond: no, we cannot!

In our world there are many – states as well as groups - who are united in their inclination to use terror as a means of action and who resort to force to achieve their goals. Admittedly, confrontation between the blocs no longer exists; a balance of fear between super-powers is non-existent, but our world has hardly become more secure, while peace has hardly become more stable.

Can we be content with such a world? Again, without any hesitation I respond: no, we cannot!

Our world is, finally, still dominated by an economic model which is self-evidently exhausted and has now reached a stage where it is itself generating crises, causing hardship to thousands and hundreds of thousands of people. If one attempts to save this already obsolete model at any cost, if one stubbornly defends a system based on greed and devoid of any social note worthy of mention, the result can be only one: social unrest harbouring the potential to erupt into social insurgence on a global scale.

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Can we accept such prospects? I respond with utmost resolution: no, we cannot and must not!

It is up to us to embark now on the enormous task of creating a new world order – not returning to anything that existed before, but creating something new, an order that will in the end provide life worthy of man for each person, that will provide equal chances for all and that will not write off those who are in dire want through no fault of their own and those who are at the end of their lives as useless and therefore unworthy of any support.

It is up to us to dispel prejudices – more resolutely than ever before – to stand up to discrimination on whatever grounds, to say no to intolerance and to promote not only the idea but also the practice of multilateralism and dialogue among civilisations. Since this and only this can be the path towards global peace and security, towards development as a vital precondition for lasting and stable peace.

Fortunately, the world emerged from a potentially very dangerous period of unipolarism and it is on the path towards multipolarism. The world is, however, still in the process of learning that dialogue, and only dialogue can assist in building mutual trust and understanding. It is not yet ready to face the fact that it is not a crime to be different and that our future can only be unity through diversity – of course under the condition of full equality and strict observance of human rights and in line with United Nations conventions.

With the simultaneous drift from unipolarism and a shift towards multipolarism we have to understand and accept that we have not only established a set of universal values but that we have not, will not and cannot establish a single model of social and economic relations applicable to all. The specific features of individual nations and civilisations must be respected since there is no reason why anyone should renounce something that is a part of his cultural or traditional heritage.

Finally, a world that will be characterised by international peace, security and development is not possible without disarmament and in particular without renouncing nuclear weapons. This was the topic of my address in the Security Council this morning. I would like to add a notorious fact that problems of development would become minor if huge funds currently allocated for armament were channelled into development.

I reiterate: the task before us is enormous.

Let us show courage and political will to grapple with it. The Republic of Croatia, albeit a small country, is ready to give its contribution. Although my ten-year term is nearing its end and this is the last time I stand at this rostrum, I can just say that I shall continue putting my skills at the service of achieving this noble goal.

Thank you!