



**PERMANENT MISSION OF
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STATEMENT BY

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**Prime Minister
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Mr President, ladies and gentlemen,

A few weeks ago, the Empire State Building was lit up in orange, the national colour of the Netherlands. The reason was that precisely 400 years ago, the Dutch East India Company commissioned Henry Hudson to find a shorter sea route to Asia via the north. After a brutal voyage, filled with hardships, Hudson decided to change course. He never found his shortcut to Asia, but he did become the first person to map the area around the river that would one day bear his name. Including the place where we are gathered today. Ever since, the origin of the great city of New York has been closely linked with the courage and resolve of Henry Hudson.

Today more than ever before, we must make those qualities our own. In the last year we have faced the harsh reality of a financial and economic system on the brink. The crisis has been so severe and so rapid that courage and resolve are now required of us all.

- The courage to place shared values and interests above narrow self-interest.
- The resolve to adapt existing global governance structures to a new reality.
- And the courage to make decisive choices which take account of all interests – especially those of the world's weakest and poorest people.

That is my clear message to the General Assembly.

The Dutch government has no doubt that a strong, decisive and efficient UN will be vital to this process. Only an integrated global approach will deliver the stability, solidarity and sustainability the world needs so badly. The last few days in New York and Pittsburgh have shown that there is a clear realisation that the world has changed. And that we must work together more closely than ever before. Our interdependency gives us a shared responsibility. We can see now that the problems we face are too big for any single nation.

So there is a strong will to address the underlying causes of the economic crisis. To work on the systemic imbalances, and to once again make finance a tool for growth. The agreement we reached in Pittsburgh on a framework for strong, sustainable and balanced growth is a big step forward. It shows there is a widely shared conviction that we have much to gain from stability, solidarity and sustainability – both as individual countries and collectively. I would like to say a few words about each of these core concepts.

[Stability]

Mr President, the current crisis offers clear proof that in a globalised world, instability anywhere is a threat to stability everywhere. The international policy response has shown that this is widely understood in the financial and economic context. That is a positive sign, even if there is still a long way to go. The Pittsburgh agreement on compensation systems should end a bonus culture that has grown out of control. We cannot allow the greed of a few to endanger the jobs of many. So we must prevent this kind of crisis from ever happening again.

Institutional reform should not stop at the financial and economic sector. There is a clear need for new arrangements that will allow us to manage a range of global governance issues at the same time. In the long term, the greatest threat to a stable world order is to allow the crisis to push the world's other great problems into the background. Climate change, for example. The energy and food crisis. Or the pressing issues of peace and security, poverty and human

rights. We cannot let that happen.

In some cases, we simply have to honour commitments we have already made, such as the Millennium Development Goals. In others, we need the courage to see beyond this crisis to the world of tomorrow, as we must show at the climate summit in Copenhagen. But in any event, the current situation demands that we place our common global values and interests above our acute domestic problems, however serious. Therefore, now more than ever, we need a strong, decisive and efficient UN. We need it here in New York, but we especially need it on the ground. And in this context I would highlight the vital importance of the 'One UN' initiative, which needs follow-up, and soon.

Stability cannot be achieved without respect for human rights. As friends of the Iranian people, we are concerned about the worsening human rights situation and the violent crackdown on popular protests. The Iranian nuclear issue represents a major challenge to international peace and security, to regional stability and to the non-proliferation regime. The recent revelation of a nuclear facility which was long kept secret, is additional reason for great concern. It calls for a strong reaction by the international community and for total transparency by Iran. Iran must regain the trust of the international community, comply with relevant Security Council resolutions and contribute to peace and stability in the Middle East.

[Solidarity]

Mr President, in June of this year, the UN showed leadership by holding a major conference here in New York on the effects of the crisis for developing countries. The Netherlands fully supported that initiative, as there can be no stability without solidarity. After all, there is nothing more destabilising than poverty, hunger and a future without hope. The economic crisis and rising food prices are threatening to sweep away a great deal of hard-won progress. In 2009 alone, the number of people forced to live on less than one dollar and twenty-five cents a day will grow by at least 55 million.

There is a real danger that those who had no part in causing the crisis will be the people who suffer most deeply. In rich countries, the crisis means the loss of jobs and assets. In developing countries, it means rising child mortality and rising hunger. So in rich countries the crisis is serious. In poor countries it is a matter of life and death.

Let the donor countries honour an old promise and set aside at least 0.7% of national income every year for development aid. And let the current crisis also inspire recipient countries to use the funds as effectively as possible. Now more than ever, public support for development aid depends on transparency, good governance and an effective fight against corruption.

I would also add that international solidarity is not simply a question of development budgets. It also concerns the private sector. More and more businesses now recognise the importance of corporate social responsibility. I believe there is still a world to be won here, not only for society but also for the companies themselves. Corporate social responsibility makes good business sense.

[Sustainability]

Mr President, my third subject, sustainability, is essentially about making choices and sacrifices, not for our own sake but for future generations. This General Assembly is our last

major stop on the road to Copenhagen. We should be aware that the progress we make there will affect the lives of our children, our children's children, and so on. Down through the generations. This must be our main motive for seeking a radical change in the way we live.

In Copenhagen we must reach an ambitious, fair and comprehensive agreement.

We must be ambitious and set our sights high. So in Copenhagen, the Netherlands will call for worldwide CO2 emissions to be halved by 2050 from 1990 levels.

We should be fair to developing countries: every country should contribute, according to its means, to the common goal. And every country will be expected to play its part. But those that need help in designing and implementing sound adaptation policies must receive it. Which is why the Netherlands has set aside half a billion euros to promote the use of renewable energy in developing countries.

And comprehensive means that we should not simply pave the road ahead with good intentions, but with concrete agreements. For example, agreements on developing the global carbon market, on sharing knowledge and on financial arrangements.

We simply cannot fail in Copenhagen.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen,

The world is much smaller than it was in the days of Henry Hudson, but it is far more complex as a result. Any solution to the issues I've raised today starts with recognising our mutual dependence and responsibility. Within the concepts of stability, solidarity and sustainability we will find the shared values and interests that should guide us on the road ahead.

It is a road that requires courage. But to echo the words I heard recently from the Italian Nobel Prize winner and senator for life Rita Levi-Montalcini, on her one-hundredth birthday, 'Don't fear difficult moments. The best comes from them.'

Let us go forward in that spirit.