

Check against delivery



***Address by H.E. Mr. Cristian Diaconescu,
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**at the General Debate of the 64th Session
of the General Assembly of the United Nations**

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Monsieur le Président de l'Assemblée générale,

Monsieur le Secrétaire général,

Vos excellences,

Tout d'abord, permettez-moi de vous adresser, Monsieur le Président, mes plus sincères félicitations pour votre élection à la présidence de la 64^e session de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies. Je vous souhaite plein succès dans ce défi qui est le vôtre.

Mon pays est fier de son engagement historique en faveur de la tolérance, des efforts de rapprochement et de la confiance dans le cadre des débats internationaux. La Roumanie a toujours fait preuve de détermination afin de renforcer le multilatéralisme, qu'il s'agisse de rapprocher des parties en conflit, de surmonter des frontières artificielles, ou bien de promouvoir la coopération entre pays développés et en voie de développement.

Je voudrais saisir cette opportunité pour saluer un événement important que l'Europe centrale et de l'Est fête cette année : 20 années se sont écoulées depuis l'Automne du Changement qui a remodelé l'Europe et a ouvert la voie à des opportunités historiques pour l'ancien bloc de l'Est.

Deux décennies sont désormais passées depuis la chute du Rideau de Fer et nous reconnaissons maintenant que la puissance de changement de la démocratie représente une des valeurs européennes les plus efficaces.

Cela demeure l'espoir de millions de jeunes gens à travers le monde, qui défendent aujourd'hui la liberté d'expression, le multipartisme, le respect de la diversité, de même que la liberté de la presse. L'histoire ne devrait jamais être oubliée. Après deux décennies de changements démocratiques, nous ne devrions jamais oublier notre point de départ. C'est ce qui renforce à présent les valeurs que nous partageons tous en Europe et qui nous permet de mieux comprendre la portée transformationnelle de la démocratie à travers le monde.

A présent, nous devons faire face aux épreuves les plus importantes que l'humanité a jamais connues. L'impact négatif du changement climatique ne fait qu'être renforcé par la crise financière et économique globale, la crise alimentaire, les prix énergétiques et les pandémies.

Le monde connaît une concentration de circonstances tendues qui ne cessent de croître, rendant ainsi nos efforts pour relever les défis de ce début de siècle plus délicats : le terrorisme, la prolifération des armes de destruction en masse, des conflits prolongés et d'Etats faillis, l'insécurité en matière énergétique, la migration, la pauvreté et les violations des droits de l'homme.

J'espère que face, non pas à un seul, mais à plusieurs défis, les Etats membres vont transformer cette situation en opportunité pour un changement visionnaire.

Grâce à la mise en place de solutions concernant la crise économique et financière, et aux réponses concernant les conditions défavorables qu'implique le changement climatique, nous pouvons viser des économies et des emplois plus verts, des sociétés plus responsables en matière énergétique et de meilleures infrastructures, de même que des outils financiers plus puissants afin de soutenir cette transition.

Mr. President,

I would like to refer to a key topic on the UN agenda: climate change. I do not propose to reiterate all its negative effects or the danger it poses to the very existence of humankind. You are well aware of them, and we have been speaking about them extensively over this past week. However, I *do* want to stress the principles that underpin Romania's approach to this issue and that we would like to invite you to consider as well:

- Nature is part of our daily life. If we respect nature, we can take long-term benefit from it and be better prepared to design and build our future. That means respect.
- We are all affected by climate change. There is no boundary to protect a certain country or a certain area. It's not as if something happening in the Pacific is not also the business of somebody living in a developed European capital. That means that we all have a common responsibility towards others.

We must be aware that everything that we do and any decision that we take has an impact on others. That's why it is so important to base our decisions on values like human respect, solidarity and responsibility.

We commend the UN Secretary General for his dedication and commitment to deal with this issue. By bringing us together, world leaders seeking consensus on what's to be done on climate change, he has rallied our work towards Copenhagen. We expect an ambitious agreement to be reached in Copenhagen!

Another challenge that affects us all is that of the global financial and economic crisis. Again, solutions must be in the benefit of all. We need to join forces rapidly to resume economic growth and development, reform financial instruments and preserve international stability.

The world's financial system no longer meets the needs and realities of our time. The institutions monitoring the international financial and economic system have to be reformed. We need to create an early prevention and early warning mechanism, and the United Nations should be entrusted with more resources and prerogatives as the main coordinator for the delivery of global public goods.

Our task will be to ensure discipline and predictability in the system, while preserving the freedom of the markets – as the main engine of economic growth.

We welcome in this respect the G8 Summit commitments to discourage protectionism and ensure the conclusion of the Doha negotiations by 2010.

Mr. President,

We need a 21st century multilateralism that is both innovative and pragmatic. Romania is devoted to such a cause and we seek to expand our cooperation with the UN in ever more creative and pragmatic ways.

To illustrate Romania's interest and more concrete contribution to the UN system, I am proud to mention just two major projects that came to fruition this year.

The opening of the first Emergency Transit Centre for Refugees in Timișoara, the first such body in the world, is as a result of the excellent cooperation with UNHCR and IOM.

The second one is the signing, here in New York, of a Memorandum of Understanding, between the Government of Romania and the UN, regarding the training of the UN close protection personnel within the Center for Excellence of the Romanian Protection and Guard Service to be opened soon in Bucharest.

In all our endeavors for a stronger multilateral approach, in order to guarantee a safer and more sustainable system, we should all consider at least four essential elements:

- The first relates to managing the current economic crisis so as to secure sustainable development and growth;
- The second relates to staying focused on the stringent and interconnected issues of climate change, poverty, food security, health, energy, migration, democratic deficits in some parts of the world, while maintaining international peace, security and stability.
- The third element relates to the consolidation of international law.
- The fourth concerns strengthening and increasing the efficiency of international institutions.

The UN and its bodies must be at the center of this renewed multilateralism with what it does best: promoting development and security, while advancing democracy, human rights, the rule of law and social development.

At the Millennium Summit, we all pledged to boost the role of this unique and indispensable organization. And indeed, over the past years, the UN has undergone a wide-ranging process of realignment and reform. However, it is also most evident that the reform of some of the most important UN bodies still lacks in pace and consistency. I hope that in the months and years to come we can see more progress in this respect.

Romania continues to share the view that the overarching goal of reforming the Security Council should be a more effective, transparent and representative body

and will join any move in this direction. Further to the intergovernmental negotiations in February of this year, the reform process has shifted to a higher gear, allowing us to pursue the mandate set forth by the 2005 World Summit.

Another significant decision taken in the 2005 Outcome Document concerns a crucial issue: the Responsibility to Protect.

A few months ago, the General Assembly held a very constructive debate on how to implement this concept. The Responsibility to Protect is one of the most important conceptual evolutions for the United Nations. This path should be thoroughly explored by Member States as it holds a tremendous preventive capacity.

Mr. President,

The solutions to the challenges of the 21st century should also make more use of efficient regional mechanisms. I am referring to organizations such as the African Union, the ASEAN, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the UNASUR, the OSCE or NATO, that are either cooperation bodies or organizations which aim towards regional integration.

The potential of smaller, knowledgeable groups of States to address the problems of a region is high. If supported, such regional groups can more easily muster political will and the capability to act. This is particularly true in situations related to peace and security, where swift and decisive action is often required.

While serving its mandate in the Security Council in 2005, Romania promoted Resolution 1631, which seeks to strengthen cooperation between the UN and regional organizations in maintaining peace and security. Since then, a lot has been done in this respect, but the potential under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter is still to be fully unleashed.

Unfortunately, there are still crises over the globe that cannot be resolved by regional means only.

We continue to face protracted regional security challenges, such as the ones in the Middle East, various parts of Africa or in the South Caucasus and the Black Sea region. The reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan are turning out to be more complex, more difficult than we all initially thought.

These situations require our undivided attention and comprehensive effort.

My country is investing a lot in the stability and security of the world. More than 1500 Romanian troops serve in UN-mandated and UN-authorized missions in all stretches of the globe, from Kosovo to Afghanistan, from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Sudan.

In the past years, Romania was honored to be able to shoulder, with its allies and partners, the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq. At the end of June, Romanian troops concluded their mission in the country. They left Iraq with the satisfaction of an accomplished mandate: the Iraqi security framework has improved considerably.

The same could be done in Afghanistan. By keeping its commitment steady and surging it when needed, the international community can succeed in consolidating a sovereign Afghanistan.

Among the perils that threaten us most, terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remain of major concern. Nuclear proliferation is of particular concern, given the increasing access to technology capable of large-scale destruction. In this context, we urge those Member States that are considering nuclear programs to fully heed the concerns of the world community and to strictly abide by international norms and regulations.

Lately there have been encouraging signs in the realm of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We highly appreciate the recent Agreement of the US and Russian Presidents for nuclear arsenal cuts, which confirms the commitments undertaken by the two States. As there are also positive indications from the United States with respect to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty ratification, we have now the confidence, within the international community, that the biggest nuclear powers are determined to advance the nuclear disarmament process.

Monsieur le Président,

Il a été dit que la violence engendre la violence. Mais ignorer ou ne pas prendre en compte les principes premiers des droits de l'homme en fait tout autant.

De même, l'intolérance nourrit encore plus d'intolérance. Il est possible de débattre en matière historique, mais il est impossible de nier l'histoire. Les tragédies, les crimes contre l'humanité et les génocides sont des péchés du passé, alors que pour nous ils devraient être des leçons pour le présent et l'avenir.

Nous avons déjà démontré notre volonté et capacité d'accepter notre passé de manière à la fois critique. La Roumanie réitère son engagement de lutter contre l'extrémisme, la xénophobie et toute forme de racisme et de discrimination. En même temps, mon pays est un promoteur actif de la diversité et du multiculturalisme, aussi bien que du dialogue interculturel et interreligieux, dans le cadre du Mouvement de la Francophonie et de l'Alliance des civilisations.

Malheureusement, la démocratie est trop souvent un vocable évasif dans le cadre diplomatique des Nations Unies. Mais nous ne pourrions pas avoir un monde stable et être à la hauteur des défis que nous avons à relever, sans promouvoir certaines valeurs qui ont prouvé être au bénéfice de l'humanité : la liberté et la démocratie, l'état de droit et le respect des droits de l'homme.

Nous devons continuer à offrir notre appui aux hommes, femmes et aux enfants du monde afin qu'ils puissent choisir librement leur avenir, qu'ils bénéficient d'un emploi convenable et qu'ils aient confiance dans l'autorité de la loi et de la justice.

La démocratie et l'état de droit constituent le système immunitaire de la société humaine. De même qu'il est impossible de combattre une maladie lorsque le système immunitaire est faible, la pauvreté se développe aux endroits corrompus. Qu'il s'agisse d'établir l'égalité des genres, de la santé et de l'éducation pour tous, ou bien un environnement propre, il n'est pas uniquement une question de

financement, mais également de mise en place des fondements constitutifs des droits de l'homme et de la démocratie.

J'aimerais conclure en exprimant ma conviction qu'il n'existe pas de défi trop grand pour nos nations lorsque nous restons unis. Il n'y a pas de danger aussi fort qu'il puisse nous vaincre si nous mobilisons notre sagesse et nos capacités.

Je vous remercie.