

MÉXICO



**STATEMENT BY H.E. CLAUDE HELLER
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
IN THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 65TH SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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(Check against delivery)

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by expressing the warm congratulations of the delegation of Mexico for the election as President of the General Assembly of Mr. Joseph Deiss, in this new session. I also wish to express our appreciation to his predecessor, Dr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, for his work.

Allow me to express also our appreciation and support for the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his efforts towards peace and development.

Mr. President,

The high-level meetings that took place on previous days have shown the dimension of the challenges that the international community, and therefore the Organization of the United Nations, is facing. The obstacles to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the economic crisis in all its manifestations, the disasters associated to climate change, the continuing threats to peace and security - either in their traditional or new conceptions - and the difficulties in effectively addressing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, define the agenda of multilateral institutions and of our governments' policies.

Nonetheless, the primary responsibility of this Organization is the maintenance of international peace and security. Years of war and conflict in every continent, with enormous loss of lives and with significant economic and social costs, have put to a test the ability of the United Nations to prevent, contain and reverse armed conflicts.

This is the case in Afghanistan and Iraq where, after years of conflicts and interventions, there is still hope in that these countries will be able to fully assume their own destiny without outside interference. In Somalia and Sudan, the prospects for a peaceful settlement and reconciliation still seem to be distant, requiring the will of the parties involved, and they have to be carefully monitored by the international community to prevent the escalation of these crises and to ensure the protection of the civilian population. In the Democratic Republic of Congo impunity prevails and, despite the presence of United Nations forces, outrageous and unacceptable crimes are committed against civilians, particularly women and children. The reconstruction of Haiti after the terrible earthquake last January, which affected also UN personnel, is taking place under dramatic conditions. The list of challenges is endless and there is indeed a risk of a backdrop and escalation of violence in several critical regions of the world.

In the Middle East, despite 60 years of conflict and skepticism resulting from past failures, there is renewed hope for peace with the resumption of direct talks between the government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

The creation of a politically and economically viable Palestinian State, living side by side with Israel in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders, is an essential condition for the establishment of lasting peace in the Middle East. We particularly welcome the efforts of President Barack Obama's administration to achieve this goal. Mexico expresses its strong support to the ongoing negotiations.

Nonetheless, the hope of a definitive agreement is marred by threats and provocations of extremist forces that seek to derail the peace process.

The leaders of Israel and the Palestinian Authority have a historic duty. Let us hope that they are up to the challenge. For that, they can count on the unrestrictive support of States genuinely committed to the peace process.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction remains a threat to humanity and increases the world's insecurity.

In 2010, significant progress has been made in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation, and the international community has endorsed its commitment to nuclear safety. The signing of the new strategic arms reduction treaty between the U.S. and Russia, the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington, and the outcome of the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), are achievements that must be commended.

We cannot ignore that the credibility and viability of the disarmament agenda depend on the universalization of the NPT and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). In parallel, the creation of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East would constitute a decisive step towards this end.

With regards to the cases of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Iran, it will be necessary to move forward by ways of dialogue and negotiation in order to solve the controversies arising from their nuclear programs. The adoption of sanctions is not incompatible with the recourse to diplomacy, which is still in place.

International security depends not only on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. It is also threatened by the existence of small arms and light weapons and their illicit trafficking, which fuel conflicts and claim the lives of thousands of people, destabilizing our societies.

It is time to tackle this challenge head on, implementing the Programme of Action on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, and advancing towards the adoption of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

Mr. President,

With regards to development, the consequences of the recent economic and financial crisis, caused largely by the failure in the regulatory mechanisms and by the over-indebtedness of the world's major economies, are still being suffered worldwide. The failures that led to this crisis must be addressed, and the United Nations must be able to play a significant role in this task.

This crisis demonstrated the need to promote international cooperation schemes that would allow us to act effectively and efficiently to meet the challenges arising from it. In particular, it is worth highlighting the positive work of the G-20 in this regard.

However, we also believe that the United Nations should play a more relevant role in the discussions on the necessary international economic governance reform. In this sense, we share the objectives set by the President of the General Assembly.

The prospects for achieving the Millennium Development Goals have been severely affected by the aforementioned crisis. Thus, the commitments of Official Assistance for Development made at the Monterrey Conference on the Financing for Development (2002) and endorsed in the Doha Follow-up Conference (2008) have been questioned. These commitments must be fulfilled.

The Millennium Development Goals can be reached in all countries, if we take appropriate individual and collective actions, as indicated in the document adopted at the High Level Meeting held last week here at this Headquarters.

It is also indispensable to advance towards the successful conclusion of the Doha Round of commercial negotiations, fully respecting its linkage with the development agenda.

Mr. President,

In addition to the traditional ones, our Organization faces new challenges that test its ability to react and adapt.

Terrorism, on the one hand, and the globalization of transnational organized crime on the other, including drug trafficking, have become new threats to peace and security that destabilize entire countries and regions, modifying the traditional notion of international security.

The fight against these acts is not the exclusive responsibility of one particular country or region: they are a global phenomenon that must be addressed and resolved by the international community, based on the fundamental principle of shared responsibility. We cannot ignore that the permission of a loose social behavior in some countries stimulate illicit activities in others.

The government of Mexico has fully assumed the challenges posed by drug trafficking and the activities related to organized crime, recovering the State's authority in areas where impunity had prevailed. This fight implies a strong investment of resources and, unfortunately, it has also represented the loss of lives. The cost is high, but it would be even higher for our society if the authority of the State remained impassive in the face of violence, corruption and the impunity that comes with them.

Compliance with international commitments in the area of drug trafficking is indispensable to put an end to this challenge.

Mr. President,

Migration constitutes a reality of our contemporary world that cannot be ignored within the scope of our Organization. Its multidimensional nature obliges us to examine its causes and effects from an international perspective. The migratory phenomenon should be addressed through a holistic approach which recognizes the contribution of migrants both to the countries of origin and destination, among other factors.

Next November, Mexico will host the Fourth International Forum on Migration and Development, whose results will be dully reported to this Assembly.

The government of Mexico is committed to the promotion of human rights of all migrants, irrespectively of their migratory status. We call upon all Member States to ratify the International Convention on the protection of the rights of all migratory workers and their families.

Unfortunately, the tendency to criminalize international migration has prevailed. Legislative initiatives and actions singling out minorities in different countries unacceptably codify racism and xenophobia establishing new barriers between communities and nations. This is inadmissible.

Mexico, country of origin, transit and destination of migrants, has lived within its borders the consequences of the exploitation and violence perpetrated by organized criminal gangs that not only smuggle with people coming from different countries but who have not hesitated in atrociously threatening their lives, as unfortunately was the case in our country last August. The competent authorities, in coordination with the governments from which the individuals concerned were nationals, are conducting the pertinent investigations of the case, and are establishing the necessary coordination mechanisms which can prevent similar events in future, responding more effectively to the protection of migrants, regardless of their origin and legal status.

Mr. President,

Nature also imposes new challenges.

We cannot afford to remain inactive before the adverse effects of climate change. The costs both financial and human of not addressing this problem are enormous, and negatively affect the welfare of present and future generations.

As host of the Sixteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 16) and the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP-MOP 6), to be held later this year in Cancun, Mexico is making all possible efforts in a transparent, inclusive and responsible way, to achieve concrete and operational results.

In Cancun we will be able to adopt an ample and balanced cluster of decisions which could be immediately implemented. One single action or one single agreement is not enough to face such a complex phenomenon. The international regime on this matter should constantly evolve in accordance with the technological and socio-economical developments, on the basis of a common but differentiated responsibility.

Cancun represents an opportunity to demonstrate the political will that would allow us to achieve results, setting the foundations for an effective and just international regime.

Mr. President,

The main advantage of our Organization in the field of multilateral institutions is its universal character. Its Charter enshrines the commitments that States have made in all its aspects. Thus, UN actions are fully legitimate, in accordance with international law.

However, we cannot put aside the difficulties that the Organization has been confronted to, to a degree of facing the risk of becoming a more unsuitable forum to take up the enormous challenges that the international community faces.

Its decisions, including those that are legally binding, are hardly implemented and its resources are meager to meet the multiple needs that arise in the maintenance of peace and care for natural and humanitarian disasters. The budget of the Organization and its scale of assessments do not respond to the reality of our countries. The UN has a major deficit of credibility and effectiveness.

All this reaffirms that the comprehensive reform of the Organization cannot wait any longer. Otherwise, alternative fora and more selective groups on a global or regional level will fill the vacuum generated by our Organization's lack of effectiveness in core issues of its agenda.

Our organization requires a comprehensive reform ranging from the adequacy and representativeness of the Security Council in accordance with the reality of the 21st century, to a greater coherence in activities for sustainable development. This will only be possible through the renewed political will of all Member States.

In 2011 the General Assembly will examine the status of the Human Rights Council, while the Council will review its working methods. We must ensure that the outcome of both processes translates into an increased effectiveness of its work and of the international system for the protection of human rights.

Consistent with our commitment to human rights in every sense, Mexico has been significantly involved in this review process.

In the case of peacekeeping, the difficulties on the ground and the need to adapt to the mandates of Peacekeeping Operations require pragmatic actions and strategies by the Security Council and the Organization as a whole to produce results in the short term.

Likewise, the reconfiguration of a global governance scheme cannot be made without the consolidation of a robust international rule of law, and of the strengthening of the International Court of Justice through the compliance of its judgments. It is a principle of governability that constitutes a vital premise for peace, assured by the prevalence of the law through the respect of States among themselves as subjects of international law.

But perhaps the reform of the Security Council is the most urgent one. Mexico has actively participated in the process of intergovernmental negotiations, convinced of the need for a comprehensive reform to improve the representativeness, transparency, democracy and accountability of this Organ.

The Security Council reform falls upon the 192 UN Member States, and can be neither determined nor addressed in alternative fora, which have an eminently financial scope. This much needed and urgent reform will not be achieved through the imposition of the aspirations of a few on the collective will. The reform will only be possible through an intermediate solution, which garners the widest possible support by Member States.

As an elected member of the Security Council for the biennium 2009-2010, Mexico has been able to appreciate the constructive role that non-permanent members can play through their contributions to the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies. Nevertheless, we are also well aware of its limitations. The short duration of their mandates impedes the consolidation of the work done and affects the continuity to the work of the Council. Therefore we are convinced that the principle of immediate reelection or longer term seats for non-permanent members are the best option for a pragmatic and viable Security Council reform in the short term.

Mexico has guided its participation in the Security Council fully convinced of the importance of the contribution that elected members have in the maintenance of international peace and security, in the understanding that this is a shared responsibility, in accordance with the obligations imposed under the UN Charter, and not a monopoly of a few.

In this sense, we have striven to consolidate the importance of mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes; to promote disarmament and non-proliferation; to preserve the respect for international humanitarian law; to lookout for the protection of the civilian population in armed conflicts, with special emphasis on children; to strengthen the rule of law; and to foster rebuilding actions favoring post-conflict stability.

Mr. President,

This year Mexico celebrates its bicentennial as an independent nation and a centenary of its Revolution, the first of the great social revolutions of the twentieth century. From our own first-hand experience, we are well aware of the difficulties and obstacles facing the construction of any national State in a complex and changing world. Our country has encountered external interventions, occupations and even losses of its territory during periods of political instability. Nonetheless, we have been able to forge a national identity and a unique profile in contemporary international relations.

Today Mexico is a constructive and open country, peaceful and fully committed to achieving agreements for a better world. Being a founding Member of our Organization, we have been loyal to its purposes, consistent with the principles of foreign policy enshrined in our Constitution. Our adherence to international law and the Mexican foreign policy contributions to disarmament, peaceful settlement of disputes, human rights, new international legal instruments as well as economic and social development, among others, are well known.

We have also learned to appreciate the importance of international cooperation to the extent that there is no challenge in the United Nations agenda that can be tackled in isolation. The survival of mankind against the dangers of nuclear war, combating the effects of climate change, overcoming the social backdrops, the relentless fight against new threats to international security and that of our own societies, require our greatest individual efforts but also the coordination among States.

It is for these reasons that Mexico will remain deeply committed to multilateralism, which first and foremost expression is this universal forum.

I thank you.

