



## United Nations General Assembly 65th Session Thematic Debate on the United Nations in Global Governance

28 JUNE 2011

### REMARKS BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

Mr. President,

The European Union is a staunch promoter of effective multilateralism and a firm believer in the fundamental role of the UN system in global governance. The EU therefore welcomes this thematic debate as an opportunity to deepen the reflection on the ways the UN can play a more effective role in managing global challenges.

While the UN is the most inclusive global forum, encompassing almost all countries in the world, other multilateral institutions and fora, as well as civil society and the private sector, play an important role in global governance. The international development architecture has undergone a significant transformation in the last few years, with the emergence of new key players, increased regional, South-South and triangular cooperation, innovative mechanisms, as well as a greater role of the private sector and civil society:

- The most dynamic emerging economies have become leading economic actors and development partners. They are now key "anchors" of the world recovery, stability, crisis prevention and resolution, as well as global sustainable development.
- In addition to informal and flexible country groups, notably the G20 which is a good reflection of the world's new balance, regional organizations have consolidated and new structures emerged in Asia, Africa and Latin America.
- Non-State actors too have gained greater relevance.

As a result, the global governance of economic relations is much more fragmented, plural and disaggregated than the usual intergovernmental discourse within the UN suggests. More coherence and cooperation at the global level amongst all key actors has become crucial to increasing UN effectiveness and to making the best possible use of the comparative advantages and complementarity of global actors.

The EU's view is that we need to identify ways to enhance the UN's central role in areas of its competence: the broad development agenda, which encompasses all dimensions of sustainable development; human rights; as well as the relation between development, security, conflict and country fragility. Global economic governance also needs to be seen in conjunction with global social governance and global environmental governance. A holistic view of global sustainable development governance is necessary, especially in view of the upcoming Rio+20 Conference.

In addition to its own effectiveness per se, the EU strongly believes that the UN's relevance in global economic governance will also be measured against its ability to effectively cooperate with this new and evolving set of economic and development actors.

Mr President,

A broad policy consensus on many sustainable development and economic issues has been recorded in several key UN documents. However, in many instances, moving from broad consensus to more operational policy-making and coordinated delivery of measures on the ground, has been hampered by outdated debates reflective of a North-South logic which no longer defines international relations. This severely restricts the capacity of the UN to play its full role in global governance.

In many instances, negotiation rhetorics at the UN no longer reflects reality, thus hindering the search for truly "multilateral solutions to common problems" and drawing UN deliberations towards the lowest common denominator. This logic doesn't only undermine the UN's effectiveness: it also puts its credibility at stake.

The proliferation of parallel processes and repetitive resolutions needs to be contained in order to restore and enhance the value of the UN voice as expressing the "view of the international community", and as such promoting policy orientations and outcomes. In order to better use the UN's convening power, we should explore alternative paths for meaningful and effective discussions, which may be more useful for consensual policy-making than resorting to the lengthy drafting of resolutions.

At the same time, innovative thinking, a genuine search for common ground, the contribution of non-State actors, as well as regional and sub-regional approaches, may inject fresh views into the UN discourse. This could lead to more flexible, pragmatic and alternative visions, allowing for more effective discussion, decision- and policy-making at the UN.

Mr. President,

The UN provides a crucial platform for its membership to engage in consensual policy-making and policy implementation. The UN system as a whole embodies a wealth of expertise that can inform and promote global economic discussions. At the same time, this expertise is of great direct relevance to the field level, particularly through the presence of UN country teams around the world. The UN therefore remains a key provider of global public goods.

The challenge today is to secure and enhance this role of the UN, and to make sure the UN retains its full relevance in the future. The UN is still the only global organisation with the legitimacy and the broad spectrum of tools which are needed to tackle the threats and challenges of today. It is up to the Member States to make progress in the work towards a strengthened UN so that the UN can deliver more decisively. The EU believes in the UN's capacity to meet this challenge, and the willingness of the UN membership to provide its full backing to this successful outcome. For its part, the EU stands ready to bring its contribution to the UN's role in global governance, thus working collectively towards effective multilateralism.

I thank you for your attention.