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ADDRESS BY
H.E. MR. JUNICHIRO KOIZUMI
PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN
AT THE FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

“A New United Nations for the New Era”

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Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the Presidency of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I would also like to pay high tribute to His Excellency Mr. Julian Robert Hunte, your predecessor, for his distinguished leadership.

Today, the international community is striving to meet challenges that the founders of the United Nations could not have envisioned some sixty years ago. The fight against terrorism and efforts to ensure non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are just a few examples of these challenges.

Japan has always pursued international cooperation centering on the United Nations. As the international community faces these new realities, the United Nations must adapt and address them.

The United Nations was created to bring about a peaceful, prosperous, and just world. To that end, Member States have united strength to promote international cooperation. Convinced that we can contribute to creating a better world with our own capabilities, Japan has endeavored steadfastly to fulfill its role as a responsible UN member. Our activities in Iraq and Afghanistan offer excellent examples.

In Iraq, based on the relevant Security Council resolutions, Japan has joined the international efforts to assist in the Iraqi people's own struggle towards a democratic and prosperous nation. Japan has been cooperating with the Iraqi people to help them to improve their daily life and rebuild the foundation of their public life. The humanitarian and reconstruction activities of Japan's Self-Defense Forces and its financial assistance of 5 billion dollars are working in tandem to that end. In order to promote international solidarity, Japan will host the Third Meeting of the Donors' Committee of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq next month.

In Afghanistan, Japan has taken the lead in assisting the national reconstruction efforts from the very beginning. Japan hosted the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan in January 2002. Japan has been actively promoting Afghan efforts for disarmament, demobilization and

reintegration (DDR). Now the Afghan people are working hard to prepare for presidential as well as parliamentary elections. These elections are the most important milestones for a new, democratic Afghanistan.

The international community and the United Nations must stand by the Afghan and Iraqi peoples in their strenuous efforts to rebuild their own countries.

Weapons of mass destruction, missiles and terrorism threaten international security in the world of today. Japan is the only country ever to have suffered nuclear devastation. As such, Japan has been at the forefront in promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Japan hopes to achieve a peaceful and safe world free of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Japan has collaborated with other countries to prevent states of concern and non-state actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

We must allow no room for terrorism to prevail. In the fight against terrorism, Japan is doing its utmost to strengthen domestic legislation and related measures, and will continue to cooperate with other countries.

The nuclear and missile issues on the Korean Peninsula present a serious challenge to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia and to the international community as a whole. Japan is determined to continue to seek comprehensive resolution of the nuclear and missile issues and the abduction issue in line with the Pyongyang Declaration. The Six-Party Talks must go forward. The benefit that the DPRK would receive by resolving these issues would be substantial. There is no benefit in continuing to pursue its nuclear program.

Mr. President,

After the Second World War, Japan experienced a dramatic economic recovery, with the help of the international community. On the basis of our own experience, we are keenly aware that, in promoting international cooperation, self-help efforts are essential to overcoming difficulties and achieving a prosperous society. Japan's official development assistance (ODA) therefore has been based on the principle of "ownership and partnership."

Environmental conservation must also proceed hand in hand with economic development. Japan has taken the lead in global efforts in such areas as climate change

and environmental protection.

In addressing development challenges including the Millennium Development Goals, Japan will move forward, making further efforts for the strategic and effective use of ODA, bearing these principles in mind.

The protection and empowerment of individuals and communities is the foundation of international peace and security. That is why Japan is advocating the concept of “human security.” Based upon this idea, Japan is making efforts to realize a seamless transition from humanitarian assistance to reconstruction support in countries such as Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste.

It is my strong belief that there will be no stability and prosperity in the world unless the issues of Africa are resolved. Japan initiated the process of TICAD, Tokyo International Conference on African Development in 1993. Last year, Japan organized TICAD III, with the participation of 89 countries and 47 international organizations. African countries are now promoting regional collaboration through the African Union and working to implement NEPAD, New Partnership for Africa’s Development. The collaboration between TICAD and NEPAD is significant because both processes are grounded in the principle of “ownership and partnership.” A stable and prosperous Africa depends upon promoting trade and investment, together with ODA. This autumn, Japan will host “the TICAD Asia-Africa Trade and Investment Conference.”

Today, in Africa, we are witnessing another humanitarian crisis unfolding. We share grave concern over Darfur with the international community. Japan has decided to provide humanitarian assistance of 21 million dollars. In addition, Japan intends to provide in-kind assistance to the Sudanese refugees in Chad.

In East Asia, remarkable economic development has been taking place. Japan has been working together with the countries in the region to build solid foundations for their own efforts towards economic development. In this region, active efforts are also under way to foster community-building. Building upon ASEAN+3, I have advocated the idea of an “East Asia Community.”

This year, Japan is a candidate for non-permanent membership on the Security Council. Japan, if elected, will redouble its efforts to play a constructive and innovative role on the Council, based on its global contributions.

Mr. President,

As the international community rises to meet the challenges we face in today's world, the United Nations must not be left on the sidelines. We need a strong and effective United Nations. Indeed, we must create "A New United Nations for the New Era." I applaud the timely initiative by the Secretary-General to establish the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. I trust the Panel will present the Secretary-General with a bold and ambitious plan for reforming the United Nations.

Peace and security, economic and social issues are increasingly intertwined. The response of the United Nations must be coordinated and comprehensive. UN agencies and organs must be effective and efficient. Changes are needed throughout the United Nations system.

Among these changes, the core must be the reform of the Security Council. In recent years, the role of the Security Council has expanded dramatically in scope and nature. The Security Council must fulfill such expanded roles with the maximum cooperation and participation of the international community.

For that purpose, the Security Council must improve its representation to better reflect today's world. In addition, the Security Council must be provided with adequate resources to address the challenges effectively. Countries with the will and resources to play a major role in the international peace and security must always take part in the Council's decision-making process. The Security Council therefore needs to be expanded, both in its permanent and non-permanent categories, adding new members from both developing and developed countries.

The universal purpose of the United Nations, our common goal, is to maintain international peace and security. Towards that goal, each Member State must fulfill its role commensurate with its own capabilities.

It is our conviction that peace cannot be achieved through force alone. Based upon this conviction, Japan has played an active and distinctive role.

Japan has made considerable resources available for UN peacekeeping operations as well as for reconstruction efforts to assist in the consolidation of peace.

Japan's Self-Defense Forces have conducted humanitarian and reconstruction activities in such areas as Timor-Leste and Iraq.

Such global contributions for peace are rooted in the fundamental belief cherished by the Japanese people, who have been seeking an honored place in an international community striving for peace and prosperity. These contributions are, I believe, highly appreciated by the international community.

Recent UN peace operations show that achieving and consolidating peace has many dimensions. The realization of peace requires comprehensive efforts ranging from peace-building to nation-building. Japan's role has thus become increasingly vital to the maintenance of international peace and security, which is precisely the mandate of the Security Council. We believe that the role that Japan has played provides a solid basis for its assumption of permanent membership on the Security Council.

In order to better reflect today's world, it is also necessary to remove the "enemy state" clauses from the Charter, as the General Assembly has already recognized these provisions to be obsolete. The scale of assessments for Member States needs to be more balanced.

Mr. President,

Next year, the United Nations will celebrate its sixtieth anniversary. We will hold a High-Level Plenary Meeting to review the progress of all the commitments in the Millennium Declaration. Development, global security and UN reform are all high on the agenda. Changes are needed on all fronts.

The time has come to make a historic decision to reform the United Nations, and the Security Council, in particular.

Time is limited. Our future, the future of the United Nations, is at stake. I would like to call upon the distinguished delegates of this body to work together and take a bold step towards the creation of "A New United Nations for the New Era."

Thank you very much.