

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF YEMEN  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**In the Name of God, the Compassionate, The Merciful**

**STATEMENT  
OF  
HIS EXCELLENCY DR. ABUBAKR A. AL-QIRBI  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF YEMEN  
BEFORE THE  
FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**24 SEPTEMBER 2004**

**NEW YORK**

Mr. President,

It gives me pleasure to begin my remarks by congratulating Your Excellency on the trust placed in you through your election as president of the current session of this Assembly. Given your wisdom and organizational skills, I am confident that you will be able to lead our deliberations successfully. Thus, your input will further enhance the stature and effectiveness of the United Nations at a time of profound transformations on the world scene.

I wish also to commend your predecessor for his remarkable stewardship. Furthermore, Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, deserves our gratitude for his persistent efforts to live up to the demands of his office in the face of complex and daunting challenges.

Undoubtedly, events over the past two years - specifically the period prior to the occupation of Iraq and until now - have abundantly shown that unilateralism in determining international action inevitably leads to proliferation of hot beds of tension in today's world in addition to harming international peace and security. At the same time, those events have further demonstrated the relevance of multilateralism in global decision-making through international institutions, especially this world body.

In view of the fact that the United Nations represents the superior form of multilateralism because it brings together member states to address common concerns over maintenance of collective security and facing universal challenges, it becomes only logical for all of us to join hands in order to fend it against marginalization and to safeguard and strengthen its role. Thus, we should not allow the U.N. system to operate at the will of one power or certain group of powers and be used to advance their agenda without regard for the wishes and interests of the rest of membership.

A case in point now, in our view, is the need to reconsider the decision-making process in the Security Council and the composition of the Council. The realities of our contemporary world and the imperatives of global security, which is indivisible, must be fully taken into consideration in any review exercise. No single state or group of states can alone guarantee world security or assume responsibilities of this undertaking without active participation by other states. In addition, decisions that are not in line with international law, Charter of the United Nations and the view of the majority of membership should be vehemently opposed-

Mr. President,

The time of this session coincides with the third anniversary of the 11 September tragedy. Once again, the Republic of Yemen reaffirms its commitment to fight extremism and terrorism within the framework established and led by the United Nations. Yemen, for its part, has made great progress in combating

terrorism and terrorists. The most recent achievement was defeating a group of rebels against the constitution and the rule of law in the Sa'dah region in Yemen. Those rebels resorted to terrorism in order to achieve their goals. Their terrorist acts resulted in harming innocent civilians and disrupting security and stability in that area inside Yemen. While the Government of Yemen is responsible for the safety and security of its citizens and the homeland, it remains faithful to its international commitments for combating terrorism. And yes indeed, our conviction is that terrorism has no specific identity or particular religion. Struggle for national liberation and for ending foreign occupation is a legitimate right under the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the basic principles of justice and human rights. Thus, such a struggle cannot be treated as terrorism. In addition, Yemen's experience in combating terrorism has taught us that an effective battle against terrorism also requires deployment of all possible resources, including dialogue, enhancing development and justice in addition to good security and intelligence work.

Mr. President,

Yemen is a strong believer in the United Nations. However, we think that despite all efforts made by the dynamic secretariat of this great institution, the gaps between rich and poor countries are widening. This is partly due to the economic policies that strengthen the dominance of wealthy nations over poor countries. Today, more than ever before, we need to examine in earnest the aspects of imbalance in international economic relations. The first step we expect in this regard is a fulfillment by wealthier nations of their pledges and undertakings announced in their initiatives. Failure to do so, I presume all of us recognize, would deepen the sense of bitterness and betrayal felt by the poor countries. It might also breed extremism and violence that no country would be immune to their evils.

In this context, the Government of the Republic of Yemen believes that the recognition by the leaders of the Group of Eight (G-8) industrial nations that consolidation of peace in the Middle East and promotion of economic growth and political development through a process of overall development in all countries of the region, as outlined in the G-8 declaration adopted at their last Summit in Sea Island, Georgia, U.S.A., represents in real terms a highly significant statement of fact and a good strategic challenge of interest to us and to the international community in general. It is indeed a challenge because this long over-due vision seeks to correct a chronic anomaly. It is also a challenge in view of its positive implications and the shift in focus it brings in favour of global stability and international peace and security once that abstract concept is translated into concrete and meaningful impacts on the ground. This requires genuine partnership and abandoning policies of coercion.

Those being our convictions, Yemen, welcomed that initiative and accepted participation into the G-8 Sea Island Summit. First, because that vision was in line with our national plan for reform. And second, because we welcome any

partnership between Arab states, the European Union, the United States of America and the world at large that enhances our development, stability and fight against terrorism.

The commitment of my government to build a better future for the people of Yemen and the people of our region prompted us to institute numerous economic and political reforms and to broaden popular involvement in governance and strengthening of our partnership with other countries and entities.

This was highlighted in the Sana'a Declaration adopted earlier this year by the Forum on Democracy, Human Rights and the International Criminal Court. A number of other countries, represented by their governments, parliaments and civil society, regional and international organizations took part in that gathering. The Forum was organized in response to reform initiatives that came from the governments and peoples of the region. It stressed that good democratic governance and respect for human rights require full mobilization of civil society energies and potential. They also need interaction among all stakeholders with a sense of responsibility and partnership with governments and support from outside the region in order to use overall development as a vehicle towards stability, progress and movement on the road to democracy and overall human development.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

No one can ignore the great achievements made by our organization in bringing about peace, security and welfare over the past six decades. But one should, in the same vein, admit that it has failed to resolve numerous conflicts that endangered and continue to endanger the security and stability of many nations and peoples. Foremost among these dangers is the Arab-Israeli conflict. Certainly, the United Nations has failed to put an end to the ongoing Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people and to Israel's repeated threats to Arab countries. Also, there are many trouble spots and areas of conflict across the globe that the U.N. must address effectively if we wanted international peace and security to prevail.

The position of the Republic of Yemen regarding the question of Palestine is plain and clean. It is based on the principles laid out by the Quartet in the Road Map, as well as on the Arab Peace Initiative. This Initiative calls for the establishment of a State of Palestine with full sovereignty over its territory and Jerusalem is its capital; Israel's withdrawal from all Arab territories it occupied in June 1967; and the return of refugees to their homes.

All along, Yemen maintained that peace in the Middle East will elude us as long as Israel was allowed to maneuver and circumvent U.N. resolutions. We also believe that Israel will not accept the aforesaid solutions unless a Security Council resolution is adopted with a view to impose a solution on Israel with an enforcement mechanism. Contrary to our hope, the entire question has become even more intractable and complex to comprehend, especially as we see the use of veto power

against any proposed resolution that would bind Israel to implement U.N. resolutions. This is the reason that encouraged Israel to persist in the construction of the racial separation wall that aggravates the suffering of the Palestinian people and takes away sizable tracts of whatever remained from their land in defiance of global consensus and of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). We wish to emphasize here that the wall can not guarantee Israel its security as recent events have demonstrated. Israel's genuine security can be attained if it accepted the Road Map and committed itself to implement United Nations relevant resolutions. We demand the Security Council to ensure the physical safety of the Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, and to provide protection for the Palestinian people against Israeli state-sponsored terrorism, in addition to showing respect for the wishes and the will of the Palestinian people.

Also, Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Syrian and Lebanese territories is an integral part of any Middle East peace initiative. I wish to recall in this regard that the Arab peace initiative represents an Arab consensus for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Furthermore, my Government considers the threats fired from time to time by the Israeli military machine against sister Syria and against Iran inadmissible and represents irresponsible provocation that escalates the already tense situation in the region. The timing of these threats further fuels violence and frustrates peace endeavours aiming at finding a just and negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. They also represent an attempt by the Israeli government to veer away from its failure to ensure security for its citizens. Time has come for Israel to recognize that its stability and acceptance by countries of the region will remain unfulfilled unless it implements the Road Map and relevant U.N. resolutions, and withdraws from the occupied Arab territories in Palestine, the Golan and the Shab'a farms.

In the same context, I wish to affirm my country's position of support to the United Nations efforts regarding arrangements for the convening of a disarmament conference which aims, inter alia, at the establishment of the Middle East region as a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. To this end, Israel must accede to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The current violence in Iraq, and the violation of human rights and bloodshed of our Iraqi brothers is an inevitable outcome of an invasion. Thus, it is incumbent upon the United Nations to fulfill its role as set forth in relevant resolutions regarding the need to provide support to Iraq with a view to restore peace and stability throughout the country. The interim Iraqi government should be enabled to exercise full sovereignty in order to lead Iraq towards holding democratic elections and forming and installing a constitutional government that represents the will of the Iraqi people and restores law and order and put an end to

occupation of the country. The tragic situation unfolding today in Iraq in the wake of bringing down the regime of Saddam Hussein has resulted in terrorism, violations and chaos all of us can see. This might take Iraq down a slope of sectoral and racial violence and conflict which in turn will threaten the unity and future of Iraq.

Under the circumstances, Yemen believes that all of us should rally to assist and support the interim government in Iraq and the national and legislative councils to overcome the current critical transitional stage in accordance with Security Council resolution 1546 with a view to safeguard the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Iraq. Also, we must ensure that the forthcoming period leading to parliamentary elections and the constitution of a national government will embody the will of the Iraqi people without any extraneous interference. All efforts should be made to develop and define political solutions for the complex situation and to provide to the interim government all what it might need to achieve a successful outcome. Priority should be given to enabling the Iraqi government to start the process of national reconciliation and to ensure the participation of all factions and political groups in defining the future of Iraq and to close the annals of the past once and for all. We also call for ending violence against civilians as well as excessive military reactions by the occupation forces which victimize innocent civilians and lead to further destruction and to pushing moderates towards extremism.

In view of Yemen's sense of fraternal responsibility towards Iraq, we submitted to the last Arab Summit held in Tunis an initiative conceived on the basis of a set of firm principles set forth in United Nations resolutions. In essence, the initiative contained guiding principles for assisting the brotherly people of Iraq to overcome its current crisis. It also called for setting timelines for linking efforts to restore security and stability with ending the occupation. In the meantime, Yemen supports any Arab or international endeavour that might help Iraq move safely to achieve peace, stability and national unity.

Mr. President,

My country believes that national reconciliation derived through dialogue and national unity is the viable path to settle the long-running dispute and conflict in Somalia. Therefore, we do congratulate the Somali leaders on the progress they have so far achieved within the framework of the reconciliation process. At the same time, we call upon all warring factions in Somalia to build on that success and to put the higher national interest of Somalia ahead of their own agenda. Yemen, which played a leading role in promoting national reconciliation in Somalia, calls upon the United Nations and the international community to assume fully their responsibilities in order to bring about peace and security in Somalia. The Yemeni Government appreciates the current efforts made to help the national reconciliation talks in Somalia reach a successful outcome, i.e. the formation of a Consultative Council, election of a President of the country, and the formation of an interim

government that leads Somalia towards drafting a new constitution and setting up a democratic system of government in Somalia. Yemen, of course, will align itself with the good offices made by the governments of Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya and supported by the European Union and the United States to promote reconciliation.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Yemen has been closely following the humanitarian situation in the Darfour province of Sister Sudan. I wish to underline here the decisions adopted by the Council of Arab Foreign Ministers which met at the headquarters of the Arab League early last August. That meeting was also attended by the Chief Commissioner of the African Union and the Foreign Minister of Nigeria as representative of President Obasanjo of Nigeria, the current Chairman of the African Union. We wish also to reaffirm the decisions adopted in this regard by the Council of Arab Foreign Ministers in its regular session on 14 and 15 September. Those decisions reflected the joint Arab-African position regarding the situation in Darfour. They affirmed the need to address the matter within the African Union with Arab support. The decisions also rejected any attempt to create a rift in Arab-African relations. The decisions also stressed the fact that there was no hard evidence of massacres. Furthermore, the meeting underlined the responsibility of the Government of Sudan to maintain security and stability, to provide protection for its citizens, and to disarm all militias in the region. Success of the Sudanese government in meeting these goals will depend on the extent of international support lent to the government and on the extent of humanitarian relief assistance given. All external parties must also refrain from interference in the domestic affairs of the Sudan. Only the Government of Sudan will assume its responsibility to deploy its forces to ensure security, provide protection for of its citizens and to confront all armed groups that were behind the blown out crisis. In the meantime, all logistical support needed by the Government of Sudan should be provided by the African Union and Arab States to achieve those objectives.

On the other hand, the forthcoming response by the Sudan to Security Council resolutions and the steps it started to implement clearly demonstrate its genuine commitment to the undertakings it entered into. Therefore, we call on the United Nations, especially the Security Council, to address the question on the basis of an accurate assessment of the situation in Darfour which, in our view, has started to improve. Favouring one side at the expense of another should be avoided. Also, focus should shift to address the humanitarian situation without any political motives or interests. All parties to the Darfour dispute should be urged to participate constructively and without pre-conditions in peace talks with the Government of Sudan in order to reach a just solution for this crisis. Any attempt at blackmail or exploitation of the events to the advantage of the rebel groups must be rejected. Any party who violates its commitments, as verified by a neutral security monitoring mechanism, should be held accountable.

Mr. President,

On this occasion, the Government of the Republic of Yemen wishes to stress that the policy of imposing or threatening to impose unilateral siege and economic sanctions, as practiced against some member states, is an explicit violation of the principles of international law, let alone the fact that the practice proved to be a failure on the ground in more than one place. Quite the opposite, sanctions and siege aggravate the suffering of innocent civilians and lead to an escalation of hostilities. While my country supports the call by the United Nations to end unilateral measures, it affirms the need to promote the culture of dialogue and understanding even in dealing with issues that are usually controversial. This indeed should be the rational and civilized approach that all of us should pursue in resolving our disputes and mending our relations.

Finally, my delegation wishes the General Assembly success in fulfilling its mandate in this session in order to reinforce our common endeavours to promote peace, security and welfare for all of us. It is our hope that the ongoing reform of the United Nations will lead to achieving the long-awaited objectives, including the equitable representation in the Security Council. This will enhance the effectiveness and credibility of the Organization and will make it even more responsive to the constantly changing landscape of international relations. I wish to seize this opportunity to reaffirm that the Republic of Yemen will support any effort aiming at strengthening the role of the United Nations and enhancing its credibility, safeguarding the sovereignty and will of its member states and pooling our energies to create a better future for the humankind.

Thank you.