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Statement by

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**Prime Minister
of the Republic of Croatia**

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*Madam President,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

At the outset, allow me to join the other delegations in congratulating you on your election and to express my deep conviction that under your skillful leadership this Session will achieve remarkable results.

Allow me also to extend the sentiments of the deepest appreciation of my country to Secretary General Mr. Kofi Annan. His relentless work for a better world has been most remarkable. Leading the UN for ten years of very delicate times, his achievements, humanism, vision and initiatives crucially contributed to the Organization. This has been recognized worldwide. I wish him all the best in his future engagements. Thank you, Mr. Secretary General, thank you Mr. Kofi Annan.

Madam President,

We live in a fragile world. In a world disturbed and unsettled. In a world that is marked by conflicts, controversies and confrontations of an entirely new nature. The architecture and the mindsets of yesterday's world are giving in to a web of new challenges. Yesterday, it was all about blocks, ideologies, the cold war and appeasements. Today, it is all about ethnicity, conflicts, burning regions, colliding religions, mass destruction, terror and poverty.

Today, international order is marked by three extremely demanding and global challenges: global tensions, global imbalances and global constraints.

In this triangular, we need to strive to deliver sustainable solutions. Our responsibility is enormous, as this new world in the making – indeed, while also bringing global opportunities, freedom and shared values – is at the same time in danger to lapse into mistrust, disagreements and divisions.

We live in a world of extraordinary inequalities in opportunities. But our world is also a global and interdependent one, where a broad sharing of economic and political opportunities could serve as an effective instrument for economic growth and development. By doing so, we can start turning the

internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, into action.

Croatia is aware that a greater mobilization of domestic resources in developing countries is a necessity. My country has made significant progress to create an enabling environment for partnership and innovation – tremendous changes took place in the development of a market economy, changing ownership structures, creating a business environment and reforms in the public and private sector. And, above all, Croatia progressed in ensuring domestic democratic stability and a prosperous international position, as a framework for long-term development.

Croatia supports the commitments regarding the goals and targets deriving from the UN Summits in Monterrey and Johannesburg, and the related processes such as the Doha Development Agenda and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. We also support the emphasis to achieve the targets in developed countries for Official Development Aid based on actual needs to meet the Millennium Development Goals and country absorption capacity.

We recognize that mobilizing financial resources for development and the effective use of those resources in developing countries are central to a global partnership for development.

Still, it is not enough to enable the international community to fulfill its obligations towards the countries in need only by raising the level of Official Development Aid. It is also necessary to contribute to a more equitable distribution of the aid that, unfortunately, quite often remains outside the regular economic and financial flows. Croatia also welcomes the initiatives to enhance the quality of aid and to increase its impact, bearing in mind that progress both for donors and for partner countries can be facilitated by harmonization efforts at the international and regional levels. Therefore, we stress the need for an integrated approach of international institutions.

Croatia recognizes the needs of Africa, especially Sub-Saharan Africa and the Least Developed and Landlocked Developing States, as well as the special vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States. We are, therefore, pleased that these groups of countries received specific reference in the Outcome Document of 2005, thus emphasizing their particular needs and circumstances.

The less fortunate must not be left behind. Special attention should be given to countries emerging from wars and undergoing a costly, complex and highly demanding post-conflict management process.

Croatia strongly supports yesterday's official launching of the UNITAID initiative. We see it as a significant step forward and express our hopes that all countries will render their contribution.

As a contributor to various UN programs and funds, Croatia confirms its capability to support the activities of the UN in numerous fields. We will increasingly continue to do so. During the last few years, Croatia has started to contribute voluntarily to a number of UN activities, programs and bodies – the UN Children's Fund, the UN Trust Fund for African Development, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, to mention only a few. Being a small country, Croatia has limited financial and human resources - but, this will not hinder us from sharing, helping and assisting.

Madam President,

Global economic and human development must remain in our focus.

But, as we meet today, the focus is very much on global tensions and instability.

Today, many ongoing regional crises continue to cause great humanitarian tragedies around the world, seriously destabilizing regional and global security. The arcs of instabilities are creating a network of fear and anger across many parts of the world. Terrorism is taking on new dimensions and forms. Weapons of mass destruction are yet another cause of grave concern. Economic imbalances and social impediments, from poverty to resources constraints, are becoming new sources of instability across the world. Religious divisions and misunderstandings add a new and dangerous dimension to insecurity in the world.

The significant increase of international terrorism has caused an ill atmosphere of mistrust, religious and cultural intolerances and grave infringements of human rights. These consequences are in time developing into their own separate and extremely dangerous problems that exponentially endanger already fragile international relations.

The Republic of Croatia, as a member of the global Anti-terrorist Coalition, strongly condemns international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and, having in mind the ever evolving threat of terrorism – especially WMD and cyber-terrorism – calls for even stronger global cooperation in the field of the suppression of this modern age scourge.

We must prove to our nations that we will stay firm and united against terrorism. In this light, a strong commitment towards the achievement of a global consensus on a definition of terrorism, and a final adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, is very much needed and would reaffirm the central role of the United Nations in the suppression of terrorism. In that respect, we welcome the UN Strategy on Counterterrorism launched yesterday and express our hope that all countries will implement it.

The Republic of Croatia has established very good cooperation with the United Nations, especially with the Security Council's Counterterrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate. Additionally, on 15 and 16 May of this year, a Monitoring team for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1267 visited my country and met with representatives of all relevant government bodies involved in the suppression of terrorism.

Year by year, we continue our great cooperation with the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna, which resulted in a recently held National Expert Workshop on International Cooperation in Criminal Matters related to Terrorism, organized by our joint cooperation in June of this year in Valbandon, Croatia.

Weapons of mass destruction and a common approach to non-proliferation must remain in our focus. Responsibility for world peace and security must continue to be the key guiding line in dealing with this grave challenge. The rules and standards must be globally accepted and the United Nations and its specialized institutions and agencies must continue to have a pivotal role.

Madam President,

Croatia won its liberty only a decade ago. Aggression and crisis in our part of Europe presented, at the time, the entire international community with a new challenge. Regional conflicts emerged as the new and disturbing roots of new dangers for international peace.

And they remain a challenge in many parts of the world. In this light, stability and peace in South East Europe, and post-conflict management and cooperation, must be viewed as a success of the international community and the countries involved.

This is where my country played and continues to play a prominent and leading role in providing for long-term stability, cooperation, and democratic development for all of South East Europe – on the commonly shared vision of a new, united and secure Europe. Already negotiating future full membership in the European Union, and based on the progress of reforms in the military and in the security sector, also standing at the threshold of NATO membership, Croatia is today an anchor of stability, security and cooperation. My country is therefore an indispensable partner of historical transformation of this often troubled and critically important region for European and world peace – transforming the region into a zone of modern society, democratic standards and values.

Croatia's specific position as a Central European, Danubian and Mediterranean country, provides added value in bilateral and multilateral contacts and experience, stemming from participation in numerous global, European and regional organizations and initiatives in the fields of security, democratic development and economic cooperation, including Croatia's current presiding of the South East European Cooperation Process. (SEECF).

As an active promoter of good neighborly relations, Croatia has embarked upon strengthening cross-border political, economic and other forms of cooperation with its neighbors. We are well aware that the consistent implementation of the highest democratic standards and reforms in all areas of our society will enable Croatia to continue to be a responsible regional and international factor.

Croatia gained extensive experience in post-conflict management, particularly in the fields of return of displaced persons, confidence-building, processing war crimes and economic reconstruction.

Stability, democratic development and cooperation – but also the resolution of remaining open issues and completing the security architecture of this part of Europe – will also very much have to be related to the indispensability of the protection and promotion of universal values; the rule of law, human rights and democracy, as well as their inter-relation with security and development.

Croatia supports the efforts to accelerate democracy's movement around the world, particularly through intergovernmental organizations like the Community of Democracies. Last year, as a signatory of the Warsaw Declaration of the Community of Democracies, the Republic of Croatia

contributed to the founding of the UN Democracy Fund to reaffirm its commitment to encourage other countries on their path to democratization.

Croatia welcomes the fact that the International Criminal Court began work on its first cases. We attach great importance to the continuation of ICC's successful work. My country also welcomes the fact that the number of state parties to the Rome Statute reached and surpassed 100, and we hope that the number will continue to rise. The Republic of Croatia also supports the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in pursuing its completion strategy. We continue to fully cooperate with ICTY, this as part of our own advancement towards the rule of law, and also as an indicator and impetus to the region, with an aim to overcome the legacy of the recent past in South East Europe.

The Republic of Croatia has been a member of numerous UN bodies, and was very active in organizing and hosting conferences and other multilateral activities. We are now ready to take the next step in strengthening our responsibility as a member of the United Nations. For this reason, the Republic of Croatia has presented its candidature for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for term 2008-2009, at the elections to be held in 2007.

Madam President,

Croatia recognizes the importance of global multilateralism as well as the growing significance of regional organizations in tackling the challenges of today's world.

The role of the United Nations in the promotion of international cooperation for development and the achievement of the development goals agreed to by the international community must remain fundamental, pivotal and re-energized. We also welcome the strengthening of coordination within the UN system in close cooperation with all other multilateral financial, trade and development institutions in order to support sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

Allow me to refer to one of the messages of the Outcome Document from last years' Summit – namely, the notion that *there will be no development without security and no security without development*. We acknowledge that peace and security, development and human rights are the pillars of the United Nations system and the basis of our collective security and well-being. We recognize that development, peace, security and human rights are interdependent

and mutually reinforcing. In facing that challenge, the United Nations system is called to play an enhanced development role.

Croatia welcomes the inauguration of the Human Rights Council and considers this a milestone for the global promotion of human rights. My country also welcomes the establishment of the Peace Building Commission that came out of a need for a coordinated and integrated approach to post-conflict peace-building.

Croatia is pleased to have been elected to the Peace Building Commission in May of this year, and I would like to use this opportunity to thank all the states who voted for us and placed their confidence in us. Our wish is to contribute actively to the UN system of collective security in an effective and transparent way, as embodied in the Charter and realigned with the Millennium Declaration.

Croatia welcomes another visible result of the efforts to reform the UN – the establishment of the Human Rights Council as the main standing body of the UN. The protection and promotion of human rights must remain a major concern of the international community as a whole. We expect the work of the Human Rights Council to be stronger in its mandate than the Human Rights Commission had been. This can be reached only through constructive support by all states, including those that are not yet its members.

Now, allow me to share with you some remarks on one of the most important task we need to address.

In this fragile world, the need for an efficient and democratic world body is ever increasing.

The Summit of Heads of State and Government held in 2005, has provided us a platform for further action toward the reform of our Organization.

There is noted progress on several important reform issues, but we can not be satisfied with the pace of the process. Croatia believes that the reform of the Organization and of the Security Council must justly account for the interests of all. Croatia advocates the enlargement of the Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, based on appropriate regional representation, in which the Eastern European Group would have two non-permanent seats. It is of utmost importance to have in a new, enlarged Council, an appropriate number of representatives of the developing countries of the South and better representation of small and medium sized countries.

Additionally, the reform of the Council should extend to its working methods and its interaction with other principal bodies of the Organization, firstly and most importantly with the Economic and Social Council. This would strengthen the UN in a wide range of areas including peace and security, development and human rights.

There is also a need to improve the UN management practices and working methods that would bring the whole system to a higher level of transparency and accountability.

Mindful that peace and security are prerequisites for economic and social prosperity, Croatia would like to remain engaged and responsive to current concerns on reforming the UN system in order to make it a stronger and more effective organization for times to come. This is our common responsibility. We need to act today, in order to timely prepare ourselves for the challenges of tomorrow.

Madam President,

Although one-third of the whole Millennium Development Goals period is already behind us, set targets are, regretfully, not being met at the desired pace. This must be changed as a matter of urgency as it is undoubtedly an issue of future security and stability of the world. We must move forward in assisting developing countries and other countries in need to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Croatia is one of the countries rated as very likely to achieve all of its specific Millennium Development Goals. It is important to stress that the MDGs targets are very similar to the goals that we ourselves try to accomplish within our own development strategy. This strategy is in line with steps we need to make on our path towards EU accession. Croatia is convinced that the best way to achieve the MDGs is to integrate the country-specific MDGs into domestic strategies and support them with development partners' programs.

With close collaboration of the governmental and inter-agency bodies, as well as civil society groups, Croatia has completed the MDGs interim Progress report. It helps us immensely to monitor progress and to lead us to better policy analysis, to focus on priorities, to set clearer targets and finally to improve national economic and social policies.

*Madam President,
Distinguished delegates,*

As I have already mentioned, Croatia has presented its candidature for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the term 2008 – 2009, elections to be held in 2007.

I feel the need to underline that Croatia's candidacy is, above all, a measure of Croatia's responsibility.

I mentioned the fragility of today's world. I did not mention the fragility, uncertainties and challenges that Croatia went through in the recent past. They are well known. But, at the same time, they are the source of our understanding, of our responsiveness to the needs of a fragile world. We believe we can contribute in building a new cooperative world, in responding to our new challenges and to enhancing our Organization.

Croatian membership in the Security Council would also serve as a telling demonstration of the success of the peace process in South East Europe.

My country went through a successful transition from a country receiving peacekeeping forces to a country that is now a contributor to eleven of the eighteen United Nations peacekeeping operations in various regions throughout the world. Croatia also provides training and hosts international courses in the field of peace-building. We are therefore well aware of the added value that countries who have subsequently rebuilt their national capacities bring to the credibility of such an important body for the cause of international peace, security and development.

Croatia stands determined to continue to support peace efforts and a strengthened United Nations' role on a regional and global level.

Thank you.