



REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO

ADDRESS BY

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OF THE

REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO

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Madam President.
Mr. Secretary General.
Excellencies.
Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Government and the People of the Republic of San Marino, I wish to congratulate Her Excellency Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa on her election as President of the 61st Session of the UN General Assembly. I am confident that her capacity and expertise will be decisive for the success of this Session. To my satisfaction on the election of a woman, after so many years, I add my best wishes for her important mandate.

I also wish to thank the outgoing President, His Excellency Jan Eliasson, for his valuable work and unreserved commitment in implementing the reform programme started by the UN Secretary General.

Madam President,

The Republic of San Marino firmly believes that the role of the UN needs strengthening to enable the Organization and its bodies to operate as efficiently as possible in a coordinated manner.

With special reference to the General Assembly, the most important decision-making body of the UN, San Marino believes that it should focus more on the actual implementation of its resolutions and put in place mechanisms to make its decisions more binding.

For small and medium size countries that represent the majority of the Member States, the revitalization of the General Assembly - the main and sometimes the only forum where they can make their voice heard - is essential. Indeed, the General Assembly is the body which fully implements the principles of democracy and equal representation upon which this Organization rests.

Certainly the reform of the Security Council is the other major objective of the UN, which is however still far from being achieved, even after many years of discussions, negotiations and hard work, in which States have been deeply involved.

San Marino believes it is necessary resuming a pragmatic and politically realistic dialogue. The new Security Council should rest upon a flexible base, so as to adjust to future changes.

Therefore, the experience gained in the last 61 years should be fully exploited, taking into account the basic principles of the Organization and learning from mistakes made in the

past. The new Security Council should be not only a modern body, but also capable of facing new challenges in an effective manner.

San Marino expresses its deep satisfaction upon the new Human Rights Council, already fully operational, and hopes that this important instrument for the protection of human rights, in the same way as the Human Rights Commission, may continue to rely most fruitfully on the contribution offered by the civil society through Non-governmental Organizations, which operate all over the world with recognised seriousness and constant commitment for the affirmation and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

My country also hopes that the Human Rights Council may be a valid and necessary instrument to raise awareness of the governments on those issues and to exercise the relevant control on the practices and decisions adopted in this field.

To avoid any duplication, San Marino hopes that there will be a clear assignment of tasks between the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, so that the two bodies, politically independent from one another, will complement each other in a balanced and effective fashion.

Madam President,

San Marino has followed with great interest the intense negotiations leading to the adoption, last 30 June, of the Resolution on the follow-up to the 2005 World Summit, including the Millennium Development Goals, and fully shares the call of the President of the Assembly to focus the attention, during this Session, on the setting up of a "global partnership for development".

This goal is a fundamental step towards the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the other Millennium Goals. To do this, however, cooperation at all levels is essential and San Marino is ready to make its own concrete contribution.

The development goals are also the key points of the programme that San Marino will present when taking over the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in mid-November.

During the Chairmanship, which is deemed extremely important for the Republic, San Marino will also address other global issues, such as intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

The Republic of San Marino, in line with its century-old history of peace, democracy and liberty, is particularly sensitive to the need, in today's international context characterised by growing tensions and violent contrasts, to promote dialogue among cultures and religions, based on respect for diversities and, at the same time, for universally recognised human rights.

In this regard, I wish to reiterate the determination of San Marino Government and Institutions to guarantee any possible support to the international community for the achievement of these objectives. It is in this spirit that my country has constantly demonstrated its solidarity towards the most disadvantaged people and situations and has acceded to legal instruments particularly important for the promotion and realisation of

international cooperation in the search for dialogue and the affirmation of tolerance and understanding among the various cultural expressions. Let me recall, in this context, San Marino recent accession to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

San Marino is also aware of the fact that the protection and promotion of the common cultural heritage of humanity, to which it pays great attention, represents an important contribution to the promotion of human values in a context of democracy, tolerance, social justice and mutual respect among peoples and cultures, a sine qua non condition for peace and security.

Therefore, intercultural and interreligious dialogue constitutes the basis for any peace process and the most powerful tool to reject any form of extremism, which, as we unfortunately know, often turns into terrorism.

In this context, we cannot but think of the Middle East, notably of Lebanon, where the UN is committed to a new difficult peace mission, which we sincerely hope will have a successful outcome.

Only one year ago did San Marino express in this very seat its confidence and hope in the peace process and in the good will of the Parties involved in the protracted conflict. After a series of violent attacks, mostly against civilians and innocent people, as always, the only achievement so far has been an unstable ceasefire.

To help alleviate these sufferings, San Marino has decided, in compliance with operative paragraph 6 of the Resolution on the ceasefire, and in line with its century-old tradition of solidarity, to offer a special contribution for humanitarian aid in Lebanon.

Madam President,

San Marino has welcomed with great satisfaction the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission as an excellent institutional response to post-conflict situations. The history of my country is deeply rooted in the values of peaceful coexistence among all peoples and, for this reason, the newly elected Government has decided to include in its programme, for the first time, a specific mandate for peace. The objective is to promote, also in collaboration with volunteer associations and by supporting international cooperation, any useful initiative in favour affirmation and safeguard of peace.

Therefore, San Marino Institutions, by accepting the UN invitation, have decided to adequately celebrate the International Day of Peace last 21 September. This occasion was also marked by the opening of a public subscription to raise funds for the victims of conflicts to be devolved to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

In an increasingly worrying context of world instability, unbalance and insecurity, the International Day of Peace represents an important stimulus for Governments, authorities and single individuals to spare no effort to stop wars, prevent conflicts and reject violence, so that, as requested by the UN Secretary General, peace may become a day-to-day reality everywhere and for all people in the world.

As a consequence, peace building implies a particular attention to the condition of the most disadvantaged members of humanity, including children, young people, women and the disabled.

In this regard, my country will guarantee its active support to the Pan-European Campaign on Violence against Women, in particular domestic violence, which will be launched during San Marino Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, in parallel with the celebration of the World Day for Elimination of Violence against Women. Moreover, it will strongly support the development of the Campaign on Building a Europe with and for Children.

Another particularly important occasion will be the participation of San Marino in the United Nations Global Youth Leadership Summit, which will examine the contribution of young people to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, with particular reference to sport, development and peace, and will provide Youth Organizations with the necessary guidelines for future actions.

San Marino has greatly appreciated the successful outcome of the Working Group on an International Convention on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities. Indeed, my country is becoming more and more aware of and attentive to the problems and rights of disabled people. In this regard, San Marino Parliament approved, only two weeks ago, an Agenda inviting the Government to sign and ratify this Convention as soon as possible and to take measures in support of the principles contained therein.

Madam President,

Let me underline how, despite all difficulties and divisions, the UN still demonstrates its ability to put in place all initiatives and activities, which are at the core of its very existence. It is therefore a duty for all States to keep alive the ideal flame and the determination, which constitute the foundations of the Organization's identity and, at the same time, the indispensable point of reference for all our actions, both at a national level and in terms of international cooperation.

Prompted by this conviction, and strongly committed to guaranteeing a constant and constructive contribution, we express our best wishes to you, Madam President, to the Secretary General, to whom we reiterate our most sincere appreciation and highest esteem for his dedicated commitment during these years at the leadership of the United Nations, to the Colleagues and to all representatives who share the same conviction.