

MISION PERMANENTE DE
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STATEMENT BY

***HER EXCELLENCY MICHELLE BACHELET
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE***

**GENERAL DEBATE OF
THE SIXTY-SECOND SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. President,

I should like first to congratulate you on your election as President of the United Nations General Assembly.

I should also like to reiterate Chile's support for the new Secretary-General. You both have the backing of my country in the work that you will be called upon to perform in the immediate future.

The international community knows my people's attachment to peace, justice, freedom and solidarity.

It knows that, despite the size of its economy and population and its remoteness, our distant country down in the south has espoused the great causes of humanity.

It knows of Chile's inputs in the areas of poverty, AIDS, hunger and social cohesion. It knows that we have made substantial contributions to the promotion and observance of human rights. It knows that we have always been, even in difficult times but with dignity and determination, on the side of international law, disarmament, non-proliferation and world peace.

Mine is a country that believes in progress and in the ability of human beings to be the subject of their own history and to build a better future. The world becomes uncertain when we are not able to act together. Globalization becomes unpredictable when we are not able to manage it.

This requires the conclusion of agreements and the strengthening of multilateral institutions, advancing towards disarmament and non-proliferation; starting negotiations for the reform and enlargement of the Security Council and making progress in management reform, about which Chile, South Africa, Sweden and Thailand have made a proposal for the consideration of Member States.

Because the great tasks of today require what is probably the greatest **consensus** that humanity has ever known.

How can we ensure once and for all that **human rights** are respected throughout the entire planet? How can we halt **climate change** on all the continents and in all the oceans? How can we make **social equity** a focus for all countries and for all men and women in the world?

These are major challenges facing us, which we must today tackle urgently and conscientiously as an international community.

Mr. President,

Chile wishes strongly to promote universal respect for **human rights**. The creation of a fairer and more humane international order will be possible only if we focus the debate on respect for the dignity of the human person, irrespective of religion, race, gender or social status.

From Chile, we shall not only work to improve our practices and domestic legislation but shall also promote consolidation of the topic of human rights as a new pillar of the United Nations system, together with economic and social development, peace and security.

As this Assembly is aware, human rights have been central to Chile's recent history. And so, for the citizens of my country, no place is remote and no situation seems foreign when the life and dignity of people must be protected.

We are pleased with the progress made in the area of policy-making, at both the international and the domestic level. We welcome the adoption and opening for signature of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which fills a gap in the system for protecting human rights from a crime against humanity. Chile signed this instrument and expects to ratify it in the near future. In addition, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture is in the process of being approved by our National Congress.

Chile also welcomes the creation of the Human Rights Council, which should promote a more effective international regime for protection, early warning and promotion in the area of human rights.

We also support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is a very important step in the recognition of the rights of these peoples.

We shall also work to ensure that **democracy** and freedom are guaranteed throughout the world. As was reaffirmed at the 2005 World Summit, democracy is a universal value, but it is a process that must be supported over time in order to take root. This year will see the end of the first cycle of projects financed by the United Nations Democracy Fund. Chile is a member of its Advisory Board. We are counting on the support of all in this task.

Mr. President,

We are studying with concern the scientific evidence showing the devastating effects of climate change on our planet. We are glad that the world is beginning to be aware of this.

There is a serious threat to our future and we must act now.

In Chile, for example, we see that the speed with which the glaciers are melting has doubled in the past ten years. Our southern zones are, in turn, experiencing a dangerous depletion of the ozone layer, jeopardizing the health of our citizens.

Although we are not the ones mainly responsible for this deterioration, Chile has begun to take the necessary steps to mitigate the effects of global warming and to combine efforts for the adoption of urgent solutions.

There is no time to lose. The effort of consensus that we must make, the effort to enlist the greatest possible support, is comparable only to the effort for peace made on the occasion of the adoption of the San Francisco Charter six decades ago.

If we do not act now, the future of all humanity will be endangered.

For this reason, all of us have the obligation to construct a new **global political consensus** to generate collective action capable of solving the problem in accordance with the principle of *shared but differentiated responsibility* and within the framework of the United Nations.

All of us must contribute, but especially those who have already polluted and have achieved their development. We ask the developed countries to promise technical and financial assistance to the developing countries that most need help with their efforts to combat climate change.

We therefore hope that, at the meetings of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol to be held in December in Bali, progress will be made in defining the parameters of a post-2012 process. We also hope that the developed countries will make greater commitments regarding mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer and financing.

We must, however, realize that the greatest effort by the developed countries will not suffice to halt climate change. It is also necessary that the developing countries take additional emission reduction actions in the framework of a global effort within the ambit of the Convention.

Mr. President,

I am the bearer of a message of hope for all nations seeking to eradicate poverty and build fairer and more inclusive societies.

We are pleased to say that Chile is closer to becoming the more prosperous country with greater social justice that we so much desire.

We are eradicating poverty. In 17 years of democracy, we have reduced poverty from 40 to 13 per cent. It is an ambitious goal, but one justified by our achievements. We

are constructing a social welfare system that guarantees the social rights of Chilean men and women from the cradle to old age.

We know, Mr. President, that we are not alone in this effort.

Poverty, hunger, extreme inequality and exclusion are realities that exist all over the world.

In this connection, the reports that we have received on the situation with regard to the achievement of the Millennium Goals are worrying. Progress has been made in certain regions, but it is not sufficient. We therefore welcome the forthcoming launch of the Global Business Plan for Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5.

We do not need new commitments; we simply need to fulfil the commitments made.

My country supports the idea of holding an international conference to focus concerted world-wide efforts to attain the Millennium Goals, proposed by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, so that the dream of *also globalizing the prosperity* that some have already achieved can come true in the not too distant future.

We can also emphasize innovative development financing mechanisms to combat inequality and promote social cohesion.

We are on the right track. The Initiative against Hunger and Poverty and its UNITAID Initiative have managed to collect hundreds of millions of dollars to finance the purchase of drugs to treat AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, which have been given to hundreds of thousands of children, mainly in Africa.

This is the way to go. Social equity and the construction of *globalization with a human face* should become a central topic on our global agenda.

Mr. President,

The three major causes that I have mentioned can be tackled only by common accord of the international community.

Hence the importance of our commitment to effective and efficient multilateralism, with the United Nations as its centre of gravity. We are at a complex juncture, but one of great opportunity. What we do or fail to do in the next few years will determine the future of our descendants.

Their future depends on our endeavors. It depends on our effort.

Thank you.