



# REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI

62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations  
General Assembly

Statement

by

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Check Against Delivery

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I bring to you all warm greetings from my Government and the people of the Republic of Kiribati on whose behalf I am honoured and privileged to address this important gathering this evening.

Allow me, Mr. President, to join with the preceding speakers in offering my sincere congratulations to you on your election as the President of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. I am confident that with your wisdom, experience and diplomatic skill, you will steer the course of this Assembly to a successful conclusion. Let me assure you that Kiribati pledges its full support to you in the performance of this challenging task.

I take this opportunity to also extend my appreciation to your predecessor for the exemplary way in which she guided the proceedings of the 61<sup>st</sup> Session of the General Assembly.

I wish to commend as well the Secretary General and members of his team at the Secretariat for their perseverance and relentless efforts in pursuit of the goals of the United Nations. In particular, I congratulate the Secretary General for his sterling leadership of this organization thus far, since taking over this top and challenging job at the beginning of this year.

Mr. President,

Our world today is confronted, more than ever, with a number of serious threats and major challenges. Every year, we all come together from different parts of the world to this beautiful city of New York with our hope to finding practical and workable solutions to these challenges. Indeed, situations in some regions of the world show no sign of improvement and are further confronted with crisis that have proven difficult to settle.

These challenges affect us each as individual countries, small and big, rich and poor, developing and developed. In a world characterized by globalisation and interdependence, the need for the human family to undertake constructive and sustained cooperation, becomes more urgent.

Mr. President,

With the growing complexity and uncertainty of events in this world of ours, especially in the context of globalisation and with the emergence of new challenges to peace and security, the fulfilment of the role of the United Nations remains critical. Kiribati remains committed to support the reform of the United Nations.

We continue to believe that the reform of this organisation is in the best interest of humanity and we would like to see that the reform processes move forward and be concluded as early as practicable in order for this Organisation to be able to respond effectively to today's challenges to global peace, security and economic and social progress.

Seeking peace and economic development represents the common wish of all nations. Without global peace there can be little positive development in our countries. Kiribati is committed, within its resource and capacity constraints, to working closely with other like-minded countries, in pursuit of world peace and stability, economic development and progress of mankind. As the only universal multilateral international organization, the United Nations remains the best forum for all States to come together to resolve problems of global character, regardless of their size or wealth.

Mr. President,

Member States of the United Nations are all too aware that globalization has brought us all to a point where everything is interconnected and the well being of almost every citizen is affected by global developments. Events that happen in one part of the world have a direct bearing on the rest of the world.

Sometimes however, we all are affected and involved in a much more substantial way.

Like other Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, Kiribati has so many constraints.

Our very remoteness from world market centres, narrow economic base and high population growth rates are factors that we must contend with. The continuing sharp increase in world oil prices and our total reliance on imported oil and fossil fuel has already put a lot of pressure on our economy. Our options for containing the adverse impact of increasing world oil prices are very limited. We must also contend with the HIV/AIDS pandemic and tuberculosis, among others, which require the diversion of the already meagre resources we have at our disposal to finance our development.

These complex economic situations of ours will continue to undermine our efforts and determination to realize the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals. In order to be able to realise our aspirations to attaining sustainable economic development and to sharing also the benefits of globalization, Kiribati would like to call on the international community to look at a new global strategy that would create an enabling economic environment for the most disadvantaged member States of this noble institution such as my own.

Mr. President,

Even with these complex economic development challenges we are forced to operate in an environment of uncertainty. I say uncertainty as our very survival as a nation and as a people with a distinct culture and way of life is at great risk as we are being threatened by global warming and sea level rise.

Our islands are widely dispersed and small, most of which barely rise over 2 meters above mean sea level. For countries such as Kiribati, global warming and sea level rise are critical security concerns. These concerns are ones that

we, as individual countries and as members of this collective body, need to continue to work together to address.

We will continue to call on the international community to agree on a unified global response to these environment issues. We will also continue to work with like-minded countries in pushing the case for a unified global response on this. As a small country Kiribati places great confidence on the international community for its survival and we hope that our repeated appeals to this body in addressing this critical issue will receive stronger political support and commitment this time. There is no more time to debate on the issue as climate change is now a fact of life. It is now time to put words into action so that this living planet is protected from complete destruction and is preserved for use by our many generations to come.

We wish to commend the Secretary General for the initiative that he has taken in calling the High-Level event on Climate Change on 24th September this year. This in itself means a lot to those who are now living under the clout of desperation, fear and uncertainty. We remain confident that further meaningful actions will follow and consensus will soon to be achieved to finding a global solution to climate change before it is too late.

Mr. President,

Terrorism is an ongoing concern that affects all countries both large and small. Kiribati condemns terrorism in all its various forms and manifestations and we will continue to support the global fight against terrorism.

Mr. President,

This time last year, Kiribati joined other member States of this organization in expressing our disappointment over the continued neglect and rejection of the desire of the 23 million people of Taiwan to join this organisation. It is further saddening to note that Taiwan's request for admission this year was not again given a fair opportunity to be heard by the General Assembly.

With a population of 23 million, making it the 47<sup>th</sup> largest population in the world, Taiwan has continued to respect and abide by the United Nations Charter based on the principles of democracy, mutual respect and understanding. We feel that Taiwan and her 23 million people deserve justice by this noble institution. It is Kiribati fervent hope that Taiwan will one day be given the nod to assume its rightful place in this highly respected Organisation.

Mr. President,

Let us all work together to make this world, a better place. A place where citizens of all of our nations, can live together in harmony, peace, security and prosperity in many years to come.

I thank you, Mr. President.