



Check Against Delivery

Republic of the Marshall Islands
President Kessai H. Note
High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly
15 September 2005
New York

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
My fellow leaders,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A warm greeting of "lokwe" from the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (Marshall Islands) at this pivotal gathering.

On behalf of the people and government of the Marshall Islands, I wish to express our condolences and sympathies to the victims and families who suffered severely as a result of the recent catastrophic hurricane Katrina in the United States.

Mr. Secretary-General, I join my colleagues in commending you for your report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all."

I reaffirm the commitment of Marshall Islands to the principles of democracy, respect for human rights, and the right for self-determination of peoples in conformity with the principles of justice and international law. For an Organization that adheres to the principles of universality and self-determination among the peoples of the world, the twenty three million people of Taiwan represent too significant a portion of the world's population to be denied membership again and again.

For sixty years, the vision, values, and principles espoused in the Charter have guided this Organization which remains our last best hope in an age where new dangers emerge and in finding practicable measures that will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burdens of infectious diseases, terrorism, armaments, and nuclear weapons test fallout.

Founded to provide for the collective security of sovereign nations, this Organization is now charged with managing a number of new dangers and require our joint response. Once charged with protecting national borders, we are all called upon to address dangers that know no boundaries.

Aside from potential terrorist threats, of equal importance to Marshall Islands are the social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities that we continue to face and endure. The support of the international community and the full implementation of internationally agreed principles and goals are crucial for our sustainable development.

Around the world, exploitation over people, land, ocean, and the environment continue to pose real and immediate threats to the very existence of Marshall Islands. Global warming and sea level rise continue to threaten us. Marshall Islands reiterates its call to those States who have not ratified the Kyoto Protocol to do so without delay and take further steps to fully implement the UNFCCC and the Protocol. Without such global actions to mitigate climate change and arrest sea level rise, our national efforts and sustainable development will be rendered meaningless, and my people will become environmental refugees.

Marshall Islands' power lies not in our economic strength, but in our ability to cooperate. We remain an active member in this Organization despite the financial burden to our small economy. We are hopeful that our smallness and remoteness will not hinder us from receiving the benefits that this Organization provides to a Small Island State like mine.

Marshall Islands is grateful to Member States who continue to provide us access to training and technology, as well as for UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies that support our capacity building. Continued commitment is vital in nurturing the development of the Marshallese people so that they become self-reliant.

The Millennium Declaration we adopted five years ago has led to the articulation of eight specific Millennium Development Goals to be achieved by 2015. While many countries are on track, broad regions are far off track to achieve most or all of the Goals. My fellow leaders, the Marshall Islands remains committed to reaching the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals. Achievement of these goals, however, cannot be fully recognized without full implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS.

Together, we can leave a legacy of a better future to our children by setting the new global agenda with bold actions and by having an effective and reformed United Nations. I wish to emphasize my support in the reform of: UN Secretariat; Security Council and in particular, the inclusion of Japan for Permanent Membership; the establishment of the Peace-building Commission, Human Rights Council, Democracy Initiatives and the UN Democracy Fund.

I join you, Mr. President, in bringing out the full potential of this central body. The Republic of the Marshall Islands will continue to keep its eyes fixed on the far horizon that will enable us to find the right road.

Thank you.