



ECUADOR

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY HER EXCELLENCY
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ECUADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AT THE SIXTY-THIRD SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, 29 September, 2008

** Check against delivery*

Mister President
Ladies and gentlemen Heads of Delegation,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am highly honored to address this Assembly on behalf of the Government of the Citizen Revolution of the President of Ecuador, economist Rafael Correa Delgado, and of the people of Ecuador at these paradoxical times of both crisis and hope.

Allow me to convey the fraternal greetings of the people and the Government of Ecuador to the President of this Assembly and former minister of Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, Father Miguel d'Escoto, for his appointment by acclamation to such an important position, which guarantees the success of this session. We share with him the need to prioritize the fight for the eradication of poverty and to pay special attention to relevant issues such as climate change, energy crisis, terrorism, human rights, disarmament and nuclear control, the rights of women and children, and the preservation of biodiversity and of cultural diversity.

With the end of the Cold War we believed, not without reason, that the confrontation between two ways of life and two great powers would give way to the solution of pressing economic and social problems of this planet. Two decades have elapsed since that historical date and we see with concern that said crisis has deepened, social cohesion is harder to obtain, new threats to security have intensified, and the use of force and conflicts have dangerously increased.

My country is convinced that the strengthening of the multilateral system is an imperative in the current world. We have no other option to guarantee peace and security in the world, than to renew our political decision of making serious efforts to advance in the debate on the reform of the United Nations system and, particularly, of the Security Council. This year we have taken a significant step in that direction with the adoption, by this General Assembly, of a Resolution that offers a general framework to advance this negotiations.

The debate on the need to increase membership of the Security Council and the need to democratize and to make their working methods more transparent and inclusive are undoubtedly one of the fundamental axis of this process of reform; however, at the same time, we should not forget that another of the central points required to give back to the United Nations the role that it should have, is to strengthen its democratic and representative body, the General Assembly.

We should not forget also that no process of reform will be complete if it does not include the democratization of the intergovernmental organizations that are part of the United Nations system or that are related to it, as provided in their constitutive agreements. In the 21st century we cannot continue working with an Organism where most countries cannot access the decision-making bodies because they maintain structures that respond to the special circumstances that prevailed when they were created. We need to urgently build a multilateral system that respond promptly and

effective to current challenges and that truly exercises fundamental principles international law, such as the sovereign equality of the States.

We cannot understand that member countries continue supporting peacekeeping budgets of millions of dollars and yet have serious concerns to increase budgets for developing programs especially on fundamental issues such as in the fight against poverty, against HIV, malaria or the effects of climate change.

Only with a profound reform shall the United Nations recover the starring role that it should play in the international context. It cannot continue to assign powers in peacekeeping and international security to regional military organizations that respond basically to the geopolitical interests of their Member States and which do not represent the interests of all the countries members of the UN.

Our citizens are asking us to report on the allocation of resources that we contribute annually to this Organization and the results obtained. It is for this reason that we consider positive the proposal stressed by the President of the Assembly to commence a truly democratic reform of this Organization.

Mister President

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To achieve the reduction of poverty and to be able to address in a proper way the needs of millions of human beings that are currently struggling in misery, disease and despair, is a sine qua non requirement in order to obtain development and guarantee peace and security.

Therefore, my country assigns high priority to the implementation of economic and social policies aimed at solving problems such as unequal distribution of income, employment and that guarantee the right for health, education and social security. This effort must be accompanied by the decisive and effective support of developed countries, through compliance with the substantial increase of official development assistance. This cooperation, as has been agreed in various international forums, cannot be subject to conditions of any kind. It must be added to national efforts based on development policies adopted by the countries in the exercise of their sovereignty.

However, there is still much to do, especially to reach the objectives agreed in the Declaration on the Millennium Goals. As we have stated in several forums, Ecuador considers that the MDG's are basically minimal referrals for survival, and that they should go beyond. In our country we have left behind a development concept based on markets' growth indexes and we are currently working actively and with impressive results on increasing the quality of live of the citizens of Ecuador, under the concept of "well living" that means to live with dignity and according to our cultural values in harmony with the nature.

Ecuador and, I am sure, all the developing countries hope that the Conference of Doha on Financing for Development throws positive results for our countries, such as access to external financing for development, relief of the burden of the service of the external debt, the reform of international financial institutions, and the effective alignment of official development assistance with the national strategies and policies adopted by sovereign countries, together with the strong commitment of donor countries to allocate at least 0.7% of their GDP to official development assistance. Middle income countries deserve especial attention considering that they concentrate more than 41% of the poor of this planet.

The role of the United Nations is to actively promote South-South cooperation. We believe that the High-Level Conference of the UN on South-South Cooperation summoned by the General Assembly of the United Nations for 2009 is evidence of the role which the Organization should play in this area, and it will constitute an excellent opportunity to strengthen and enhance this important cooperation.

Thus, it is necessary that economic and social development hold a privilege place in the work we do at the United Nations. Without a total application of the commitments acquired and without a true inclusion of our needs based on our agendas for development, we can not talk of international peace and security.

Ecuador wishes to highlight the transcendental role which the Group of 77 and China, as well as the Non-Aligned Movement have to play in these and other issues. During the last ministerial meeting of the NAM, held in Tehran, Iran, in July of this year, the States parties of the NAM reiterated our conviction in the validity of this important mechanism of political agreement, to ensure that the interests of our countries are taken into account.

Mister President

Ladies and gentlemen Heads of Delegation,
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Ecuador also assigns great importance to the role which the United Nations must play to establish a world order based on the respect for International Law, the norms and principles established in its Constitutive Charter, the promotion and the respect for human rights and for International Humanitarian Law.

My country supports the actions the United Nations is putting in place to address the serious problems of security we face, such as the fight against terrorism, the world problem of drugs, the fight against transnational organized crime. In this sense, we are glad to see the positive results reached during the first analysis of the advance in the implementation of the Global Strategy against Terrorism, and which decided to institutionalize the Counter Terrorism Working Group. My country will continue to provide all its support to these important initiatives.

Ecuador also supports negotiations aimed at the eventual adoption of a legally binding Convention on terrorism. However, we believe that, in view of the transcendence and the

implications of the issue, this Convention should gather in an express and unequivocal way the obligations of all States of limiting the fight against terrorism in the framework of international law, human rights, international humanitarian law and the principles and norms established in the United Nations Charter.

The fight against terrorism cannot be an excuse for some States to feel released from their obligation of respecting fundamental norms of international law, such as the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of other States, and the non-intervention in their internal affairs. The violation of the human rights of alleged terrorists, who have been tortured, have been incarcerated in clandestine military prisons and have been deprived of the elemental right to defend themselves also constitute a very serious precedent. These practices must be condemned by the international community.

The world needs States and peoples committed with the strengthening of the multilateral system, through, as I said before, a reform of the United Nations, but also contributing to the full validity and the respect for International Law, International Humanitarian Law and human rights. For my country, this is a position of principle that cannot be subject to any type of interpretations or violated under any circumstance, regardless of the high interests and values any such measures may intend to defend.

The sovereignty and inviolability of the territory, the non-use of force or threat of use of force and the non-intervention in the affairs of other States are the only guarantees for peaceful coexistence among the peoples of the world.

Ecuador assigns high priority to the actions of the international community to have the States comply in good faith with their obligations regarding human rights. We believe that the Human Rights Council is consolidating its position as the best mechanism for the preservation and protection of human rights. It has substantially improved its working methods, but it requires that all countries make efforts to set aside their political objectives to allow this body to effectively comply with the purposes for which it was created.

I am convinced that the Universal Periodic Review system established by this Council is a right step in that direction. For this reason, my country was glad to be the second country in the world to submit its review, in April 2008. On this occasion, we reiterated our unfailing commitment with the respect and the protection of human rights; we were able to share with the international community the substantial advances made in the implementation of the National Plan for Human Rights and voluntarily made additional commitments.

The adoption of the United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples is a milestone. My country was actively involved in the negotiation of this important instrument and now it is committed to its implementation and follow-up, in order to contribute to national policies aimed at consolidating the cultural identity and the effective exercise of the political, economic and cultural rights of the indigenous peoples and nationalities of Ecuador.

Mister President
Ladies and gentlemen Heads of Delegation,
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The issue of migration is of singular importance for my country. The Government of Ecuador is implementing a comprehensive immigration policy contained in the National Human Development Plan for Migrations, which includes programs, projects and actions aimed at guaranteeing the protection and the comprehensive treatment of migration issues, of migrant persons, regardless of their origin and their administrative status within the territory of a State.

The free mobility of persons is a right that must be protected and I believe that none of the governments represented here is opposed to that. However, the regulation of such mobility must be in line with the principles of International Humanitarian Law and with the human rights of migrants. In the words of the President of my country, economist Rafael Correa, "there are no illegal human beings, only practices that violate the rights of persons".

In this sense, we cannot tolerate the Return Directive issued by the European Union. We believe that today, more than ever before, our countries must join together to demand effective compliance of the obligations issued from international agreements on human rights and also on migration. Emigration and return must both be an expression of freedom.

The new Constitution of Ecuador establishes the principle of universal citizenship, the free mobility of all peoples on earth and the progressive end of the foreign condition as a transforming element of unequal relations between countries, especially between the North and the South. We must not forget that migration is a direct consequence of excluding economic models where the market, the accumulation and selfishness, make invisible the true needs of human beings.

As I already said, humanism and solidarity are fundamental principles that guide the actions of the Government of Ecuador. These principles are also the foundation, as expected, of the decision of my country to adopt a State policy on refugees, on September 16 of this year. This policy is aimed at providing assistance from a comprehensive way to persons that are placed under the protection of Ecuador.

We will fulfill, as we have always done, all the national commitments of which we are parties regarding refuge seekers, but we need the determined cooperation of the International Community. We must not forget that Ecuador is currently the country with largest number of persons in need of international protection in all the Western Hemisphere. According to studies conducted by UNHCR, there are approximately 200,000 Colombian citizens in need of international protection in the territory of Ecuador. This figure includes known refugees –more than 18,000-, pending refuge applications and the enormous group of people that have not yet been able to access the

international protection system. Ecuador will apply, among other concrete actions, a process of extended registration, which will benefit thousands of Colombian brothers in urgent need of international protection.

The world food crisis is an issue that our countries must address in a comprehensive and not in a biased way, as some countries are trying to do, and as it has been done until now. This phenomenon is evidently linked with the possibilities of development, which turns it into an alarming element that must be analyzed in all its dimensions.

In this sense, Ecuador believes that the existence of subsidies and other trade distortions gravely affect the efforts that developing countries with large agricultural sectors may undertake, because they adversely affect their activities. For all these reasons, Ecuador firmly supports the proposal of holding a special meeting on this issue, to review initiatives and possible ways to find solutions to the issue. In this sense, Ecuador is glad to see that the issue has been included in the agenda of the 63rd session of the General Assembly.

On the other hand, Ecuador can not miss to point at the current financial crisis that deserves a especial attention by this Organization. This crisis is a result of a decreasing current economic system that supersedes a speculative capital above the productive capital that go against the good well being and the development possibilities of the majorities. This is not a country crisis but a systematic crisis of the capitalism that requires profound and integral responses.

Mister President
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Ecuador, whose foreign policy reflects its firm commitment with disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, has not only adhered to international instruments adopted in this issue but it also supports and executes all actions issued from these instruments to achieve their effective implementation. Regrettably, we are concerned by the fact that there are countries that have not adhered to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons while others, which have adhered to it, are not complying with their obligations, especially in regards to disarmament and destruction of their arsenals.

Other issues of great concern for my country are the fight against transnational organized crime and its ramifications: production and illicit traffic of narcotics, corruption, manufacturing and illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, trafficking in persons.

We believe that the United Nations has taken determined steps in these issues by adopting international conventions that allow cooperation between our countries to fight these scourges. We reiterate our commitment to continue cooperating and implementing national policies required to address these issues, but we believe that having adequate and

equitable international cooperation is essential. This cooperation, as I already said, must respond to the needs of our countries and must be aimed at supporting the national policies adopted by my country.

In the specific case of the fight against corruption, we believe that, to ensure the proper implementation of the relevant UN Convention, effective mechanisms of cooperation must be established, especially to extradite the persons responsible for this type of crimes that are found in our territories, as well as to assist in the recovery of the plundered resources of our countries.

Ecuador is convinced that the multilateral system, as opposed to the unipolar system, is the only way the world has to overcome the problems it faces, and above all to guarantee the wellbeing of the peoples and international peace and security.

To conclude, I wish to convey the world that Ecuador has made a new step towards strengthening of democracy. Yesterday, the Ecuadorian nation approved by an ample majority a new Political Constitution of the State that constitutes a new social pact based on a different relation among state, economic and politics, creating a new model of development aimed at human welfare and harmony with the nature.

Thank you very much.