



**REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**  
**President**

**Address by the**  
**President of the Republic of Macedonia,**  
**His Excellency, Dr. Gjorge Ivanov,**  
**at the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations**  
**General Assembly**

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(Check against delivery)

**Honorable Mr. President,  
Distinguished Mr. Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am greatly honored to address this outstanding forum and share the views of the Republic of Macedonia on issues of global concern.

In this dynamic, hyper-connected and changing world, one thing remains constant, and that is the need for greater predictability. Predictability on which peace, security and stability depend, but also global welfare and progress.

Mankind is today faced with many challenges, though two challenges request our full attention.

The first one comes from the order of the nature, and the second of the international order. The root of the first challenge is in the human neglect of natural laws. The second challenge arises from the violation of international laws.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Guided by the idea that “man is the measurement of all things”, mankind has made a wrong calculation. We are in a race for progress and new discoveries, which go hand in hand with the race for unequal exploitation of resources. Race in which the only rule is that there are no rules. Everything is possible and everything is allowed, including pollution of the air we breathe, the water we drink and the soil we feed from.

As humankind, we were selfishly focused on immediate wants and needs. We forget that natural resources are given to us in confidence to preserve them for our children.

Opposing nature, we are undermining the foundations of our own future. Our citizens, our states and economies are already starting to pay the price. We are to face a period of extreme weather conditions, when the cities are more likely to be flooded, rivers will dry up, crops will fail, and the price of food will increase. Natural disasters at global level are a loud alarm that climate change is a new reality that is changing our lives and the lives of the future generations. Recently, our region, Southeast Europe, was hit by and reminded of this reality.

The Republic of Macedonia is the first country in our region which has completed the Third National Report under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We have already defined the next steps in all key sectors of the economy and society at national and local level for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. We have done this by enforcing strategies and making efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency.

We welcome the initiative of the President of the 69<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa, on taking decisive and concrete measures to remedy the two pains of the world: increased global poverty and diminished access to basic resources - pure water, education, health care and clean environment.

Here, at the United Nations, we are all one family. And, as a family, we should help each other in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. But we have to focus on two things: how to reduce global poverty and ensure sustainable development.

Next year, 2015, is a year of great expectations worldwide. Expectations that a real synergy of all major challenges will finally be achieved - climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. We expect the post 2015 development agenda to include global, holistic, scientifically-grounded, feasible and legally binding goals as we have to leave a safer world to our descendants.

However, we should be aware that the natural balance is disturbed and many things will not be as before. We will need to learn to live in this changed world.

### **Esteemed Excellencies,**

As the challenge posed by the nature is a result of the human neglect of the natural laws, the challenge of the international order arises from the violation of international law.

I said before that here we are all one family of the United Nations. In every family there are rules of conduct and mutual respect. Families without rules of conduct are known as dysfunctional families.

The Republic of Macedonia is strongly committed to respecting the United Nations Charter, which is one of the primary foundations and principles of the international law.

The rule of law is incomplete and impossible without respect for human rights. As a member of the UN Human Rights Council, the Republic of Macedonia, in continuity and in essence, is committed to protecting and promoting human rights and the right to human dignity in the world. The Republic of Macedonia has achieved the highest standards of respect for human rights and the rights of communities worldwide. This is possible thanks to the Macedonian model of coexistence as a model of integration without assimilation which is not based on tolerance, but on respect for diversity.

It is indeed human rights and human dignity of the Macedonian citizens that are being continually denied by one member of this family and a member of NATO and the European Union.

Identity and language are inseparable parts of our personality, of freedom of expression, of human rights. They are universally accepted principles that no one and never compromise with. The respect for human rights, including the

right to self-identification and human dignity, are the highest values of the United Nations. Highest values which are also political criteria for membership of the Republic of Macedonia in the European Union.

Forcing us to give up on the Macedonian identity, the country that is blocking us requires from us the impossible – to breach the fundamental principles of the Union in order to meet the conditions for membership in the Union. It requires that we breach the rule and betray our global family.

**Dear Friends,**

When, in 2008 at the NATO Summit in Bucharest, we refused to change the identity of the Macedonian people as a precondition for the already deserved membership in NATO - we did it on the basis of international law.

When, on November 17, 2008, we launched the proceedings against our southern neighbor to the International Court of Justice - we did it on the basis of international law.

When, on 5 December, 2011, the International Court of Justice ruled that the blockade of the Republic of Macedonia's integration in NATO is illegal, that the undertaken international commitments are violated, it did it on the basis of international law.

When, in a year to a year, we sustain the unprincipled and illegal blockades, we do it because of international law. Because we believe that international law is the only thing that provides predictability and certainty in this world order.

With our example, we demonstrate in principle how other countries should respect international law. Even the International Court of Justice almost unanimously concluded that we acted correctly.

Despite this, the Republic of Macedonia is ready for a mutually acceptable solution within the framework given by the resolutions of the United Nations, the Interim Accord and the Judgment of the International Court of Justice. The issue of identity has never been part of this framework, because identity is neither discussed nor negotiated.

Therefore, I urge the United Nations and the competent authorities to become engaged and devote maximum attention in finding a mutually acceptable solution within the framework of international law.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Two years ago I was at this same place. I remember well that it was preceded by the high-level meeting on the rule of law at national and international level. The General Assembly debated the Secretary-General's report on the Rule of Law.

Two years have passed and we are still debating. We are still waiting the ruling of the International Court of Justice to be respected.

Our southern neighbor continues, day by day, to violate international law. It continues to violate the resolutions of the United Nations of 1993 and the 1995 Interim Agreement. It still ignores the ruling of the highest legal authority in the world.

The ruling does not apply only to the state that blocks us. The ruling applies *Erga Omnes* to all member states of the international organizations that still block our membership.

Every blockade in our European and Euro-Atlantic integration undermines the international legal order. By tolerating the blockades, a dangerous precedent is created. A precedent of mutual blocking and blackmailing, motivated by narrow national interests at the expense of the collective interests of the European Union and NATO. Hence, dysfunctional families are created that do not respect the rules of conduct.

Disrespect of the highest legal authorities implies erosion of the culture of respect for international law in the world. The erosion suspends the rule of law and leaves room for anarchy.

For years we pertinently point out that if someone pollutes the spring, then the flow and the watershed will be contaminated as well. If someone questions the basic human rights, the right to human dignity and the right to self-identification, then the rest of international law will be challenged, too. While we were warning that in the case of the Republic of Macedonia international law is violated, rarely anyone listened to us. Today, the price is higher.

Everyone calls upon international law when others are expected to respect it, and ignore it when they themselves must respect it.

We do not want to follow the example of those who break the law as we are aware of the consequences.

If you remove one link, one factor or one participant from an eco-system, then you cause instability and unpredictability in its functioning.

We live in a world and age of global interdependence, of global eco-system. When a state fails to comply with international commitments, it encourages others to do the same. Today we are witnessing the consequences of such behavior.

In conditions of impaired international legal system, the world is rapidly sinking into the dark areas of the anarchic international relations.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The world order is in a latent crisis. The processes of global interdependence and sub-national fragmentation transform all our previous perceptions of the world. In less than a decade, we have experienced two major changes.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, have shaken the global political and security order.

The collapse of Lehman Brothers on September 15, 2008, has stricken the global economic order.

The only remain of the world we used to know is the international legal order. However, the legal system is challenged as well.

The Republic of Macedonia sees its future in NATO and the European Union.

With its enlargement policy, the European Union has long been a beacon that lit the path of the states of Eastern and Southeastern Europe to the advanced European family. We have recently been informed that in the next 5 years that beacon will not be in service. If the beacon is not in service, there is a danger of shipwreck. Southeast Europe region is still vulnerable, and the storm is not far away.

I want to send a message to the partners in the European Union. Postponing the enlargement, the EU is creating a vacuum in the historically most porous geopolitical space. And we all know that there is no vacuum in the geopolitical space. Sooner or later, the vacuum will be filled. Therefore, it is necessary all the countries of the Western Balkans to be integrated into the European Union as soon as possible. For us, the membership card is not that important, but important are the necessary membership criteria and standards.

In our case, the beacon of the European Union is dim because of tolerating devaluation of international law, human rights and the right to human dignity, which is the fuel that powers up the beacon. Losing the light, the European Union is losing the most valuable - its power to motivate states to reach even higher values, standards and criteria.

I also want to send a clear message to my region. In such circumstances, now is the time when the Balkan countries should demonstrate maximum solidarity and unity in achieving the shared goals. Cooperation in integration, economy, infrastructure, energy, environmental protection, terrorism and organized crime suppression. We must resist and jointly address the shared challenges.

In the world that is rapidly changing, the need for greater predictability in international relations remains. Only international law offers the reliability and predictability on which world peace and progress of our countries depend.

International law is the only barrier that protects us from a disaster in the international order. And that international law is constantly breached.

**Dear Friends, Esteemed Colleagues,**

We are here as highest representatives of our countries in this family. I am confident that most of you agree with these conclusions. But the question is how many of you are willing to take actions to change the things. I wish we

are not in a situation to debate and just conclude over and over again. It is high time we start with actions.

This is the last call. It is enough to ask ourselves whether this order has an alternative.

Failure to comply with natural laws led to accelerated climate change, and to more floods, earthquakes and fires.

Failure to comply with international law contributed to increased anarchy in the relations and interventions against those who flooded, burned and destroyed the order today.

Not long ago, the 6<sup>th</sup> Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations was held with a focus on unity in diversity. Notwithstanding, while the world is talking about unity in diversity, radical extremists are united in their intentions to destroy the unlike.

As we speak, millions of faithful believers around the world feel the pain caused by the narrow-minded individuals and groups, imbued with religious fundamentalism.

As we speak, a systematic destruction of individuals and communities is happening.

As we speak, hundreds of thousands are persecuted. Their homes have been devastated, their temples destroyed, their past is erased and their future is in question.

Recognizing that terrorism cannot and should not be identified with any religion, nation or civilization, we strongly condemn mass atrocities committed by anyone, anywhere.

We commend yesterday's debate of the United Nations Security Council. What we need is urgent measures.

The Republic of Macedonia has already made the first steps. Recently, we adopted amendments to the Criminal Code regarding the foreign fighters, who are a real threat to the entire region.

Everything that is happening in the crisis hotspots reflects on Europe, which has its own crisis hotspot now in Ukraine.

### **Esteemed Excellencies,**

It is sad that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century we have witnessed the tragedy of the Middle East and North Africa. It is sad that this is happening in Europe, in the year which was declared the International Year of Peace. It is obvious that at the centenary of the WWI, the lessons of the past have not been learned yet.

Biggest victims of Ukraine crisis are the innocent citizens and the material losses. The Republic of Macedonia supports all the efforts aimed at restoring peace and stability in this country. I am convinced that through dialogue, with political and diplomatic means, Ukraine will be able to deal with the challenges

and continue on the path of ensuring a prosperous future for its citizens. The world is facing serious challenges. Natural, but also political. In the core of both are the double standards.

Double standards put forward equations with many unknowns; create a world where the only thing we are certain of is that we cannot be sure about the future of our children.

Only respect for international law gives greater certainty to avoid the storms in our dynamic world.

Hence, the Republic of Macedonia supports the process of reform of the Security Council, as a significant part of the overall reform of the United Nations. It is a complex and sensitive process. We agree with the proposal to negotiate on the actual text. At the same time, we stress that it is necessary the text to be maximally supported by the membership. We support the reform that will ensure respect of international law, respect of international commitments and rulings. Reform that will provide greater predictability in the world.

“There will be no peace, no development without respect for human rights and the rule of law.” These are the words of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon at the opening of the 67<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

Only international law gives us the opportunity to solve the equation, so as to be able to plan the future, to have peace, security and stability.

### **Dear Friends,**

Youth has always been the biggest victim of double standards, of violation of natural and international legal order by the previous and current generations. They will breathe polluted air and drink polluted water, and eat food from contaminated soil. They will be the victims of unjust systems. Unless we do something.

In 2003, we initiated the first Forum of the Dialogue among Civilizations, held in Ohrid, under the leadership of former President Trajkovski. The Dialogue among Civilizations, both chronologically and in essence, pre-dated the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, which was formed in 2005 at the initiative of the Governments of Spain and Turkey. Namely, only through dialogue can we come to union, to alliance of civilizations.

The Brdo-Brioni Process Summit was recently held with the participation of the German Chancellor, Her Excellency Mrs. Merkel. A whole chapter in the Joint Declaration is devoted to the youth.

As President of the Republic of Macedonia, it will be my honor, together with the Director-General of UNESCO, Ms. Irina Bokova, to organize the coming Dialogue of Civilizations in 2015, which will be entirely dedicated to the youth.

In the year when we mark a century of the World War I, we recollect the positive experiences of Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer in



establishing the Franco-German Cooperation Office in 1963. The experience of cooperation between youth should be applied in establishing the Office for Young Europeans from all countries of Southeast Europe, thus our region would be transformed into a Europeanized Balkans.

We call on the leaders to devote more time and attention and invest in youth. We cannot change our past, but we can, by changing the present, change the past of the generations that come after us. For this, it is necessary to educate young people about the importance of dialogue, which involves respect and acceptance of diversity.

**Thank you.**