

10 May 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Ministerial Conference of the Non-aligned Movement**

His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Kamel Amr, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt,
His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Excellencies, Ministers and senior officials,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Members of delegations,

At the outset, I should like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to the people and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for their warm welcome and generous hospitality and the outstanding level of organization of this important Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement. I would also like to express my appreciation for the assiduous efforts of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the active and constructive role it has played over the past three years since it became the Chair of the Movement in July 2009. Its leadership has contributed greatly to advancing the efforts of the Non-Aligned Movement. I hope for the progress and prosperity of this noble country as it looks forward to a bright era of development, democracy and human rights.

It is also my honour in particular, as President of the General Assembly and a citizen of the State of Qatar, which is one of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, to say how proud I am to be able to participate in this important meeting, which offers an opportunity for the members and observers of this influential forum to discuss constructively international developments at various levels, and contribute effectively to the preparatory arrangements for the forthcoming summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, scheduled to take place in Tehran in August 2012.

As we are about to begin our work in beautiful Sharm el-Sheikh, I should like to recall with fondness and appreciation the efforts of the Movement's founding fathers, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Tito, Nehru, Nkrumah and Sukarno. They were the pioneering leaders who laid the foundations of this active and effective Movement, which has demonstrated its importance over the course of 50 years through its contributions in international multilateral forums and its interaction with the General Assembly. The Movement has become one of the most important and largest political groups in the United Nations and its most effective. Having some 120 member States, approximately two-thirds of the members of the United Nations, it is, perhaps, the most prominent political group in the General Assembly.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We meet here today at a critical time for the international community. We are faced with several difficult challenges at all levels, including international peace and security, achieving economic and

social development, fostering human rights concepts and integrating values of justice, participation and democracy in their true sense into the management of the international system.

In that regard, it is clear to all the magnitude of the challenges facing the international community, in particular the General Assembly of the United Nations as the focal point of international coordination and policy-making efforts aimed addressing those challenges, in accordance with the role defined for it since 1945 under the Charter of the Organization.

In such critical circumstances, the Non-Aligned Movement plays a crucial role in the framework of the General Assembly, of which I am honoured to be the President for the current session. The role of the Movement is indispensable to fostering a balanced international vision in the resolutions and documents of the General Assembly, which affect the lives of the worlds' peoples. The Movement helps ensure that United Nations resolutions and documents constitute a balanced international programme of action that takes into account the interests of all equally, whether they are from the East or the West, from developed or less-developed countries, or from landlocked or advanced countries, with a view to attaining true justice and democracy in international relations and achieving the interests of all, and not just a certain group of Member States. I encourage the Movement to continue increasing its interaction with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and its engagement and coordination with other blocs.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since its inception at the height of the political polarization that marked the cold war, the Non-Aligned Movement has strived to uphold and promote the values of justice, freedom and independence, values which benefit not only the Movement, but all of humanity. In view of the situation at the international level, there is no doubt that there is now, more than ever, an urgent need to foster the concept of the democratization of international relations. As President of the General Assembly, I believe that it is necessary to emphasize the critical importance of coordination between the Non-Aligned Movement and other political groups, as well as those tasked with coordinating the work the United Nations, at the forefront of which are the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, and of making the best use of the Organization's diversity.

In that regard, I look forward to the important role the Non-Aligned Movement can play in the revitalization of the General Assembly and the broader United Nations reform process, including the reform of the Security Council to reflect the new global reality. The reform process is something to which I have attached great importance during my tenure as President of the Assembly. I made the revitalization and reform of the United Nations one of the four priorities for my term of office. Those priorities, which I defined when I first commenced my duties, cover the range of the Organization's concerns, including the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, strengthening the capacity to prevent and respond to disasters, sustainable development and global prosperity. There is no doubt that an able and effective General Assembly will enhance the Organization's ability to achieve its objectives in accordance with the Charter, while maintaining a balance between the Organization's principal organs and their respective mandates.

In that connection, I cannot but pay tribute to the richness and diversity of the work of the Non-Aligned Movement. It has always played an important role in shaping a more secure and stable world, as reflected in and chronicled by the documents the Movement has adopted at its meetings over the past fifty years. Those documents have also highlighted the significance the Movement's support for peace based on justice and international resolutions with respect to the right of the Palestinian people to establish an independent State on Palestinian territory occupied since 1967. In that connection, I should like to recall that the General Assembly is capable of lending its support to the Palestinian people and is ready to elevate the level at which they are represented, if the Palestinian leadership decides to go down that path.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The current reality requires that we seriously address the priority of integrating the values of justice, equality and democracy in international relations. We can enhance international stability only by respecting the rule of law and ensuring equality, without discrimination, among the members of the international community in respect of rights and duties. The Non-Aligned Movement, in view of its importance at the international level, its history and the experience it has gained in half a century of international multilateral work, can contribute effectively to efforts aimed at ensuring that international relations are characterized by greater democracy and enhanced governance. As we strive to achieve that goal, we must take into account contemporary developments in order to ensure that international multilateral mechanisms, the foremost of which is the United Nations, reflect the current international situation.

Before concluding, I should like to emphasize the importance of the Alliance of Civilizations as one of the principal mechanisms for fostering international stability and understanding between the peoples of the world and spreading a culture of dialogue and acceptance of the other, which is what is required to address the root causes of many regional and local conflicts. The support provided by the Non-Aligned Movement, which has significant political influence, will undoubtedly contribute to the success of the Alliance's efforts.

I would like to say, once again, that it is an honour to be able to speak before you today. I look forward to receiving the Movement's support for many of the major activities that I intend to convene in the near future, including the high-level debate scheduled for 17 and 18 May 2012 on the state of the international economy, the high-level debate scheduled for May 22 on preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio and the high-level debate scheduled for May 23 on the role of mediation in the settlement of international disputes, which is the central theme of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Achieving security, development and prosperity requires the international community, to which we all belong, to cooperate and foster participation based on fairness and balance. The Non-Aligned Movement, with its diversity and political influence, is a key partner in the promotion and activation of that framework, with a view to achieving our nobles goals and making the world a place better.

I wish you every success in your work. Thank you.