

United Nations Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

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Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly, at the Argentine Foreign Service Academy

Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Buenos dias!

I am very pleased to be with you here in the beautiful land of Argentina - founding country of the United Nations.

I had the honor of serving as non-resident Ambassador of my country to Argentina for over 10 years.

Argentina is an important member of the international community. Both on the regional and on the international stages, you offer nations a strong and steady partnership.

Your contribution to major peacekeeping initiatives illustrates your deeply-held commitment to the mission of the United Nations, and to building a more peaceful world for all.

As Chair of the Group of 77 and China last year, you served as an important bridge between South and North. You made a valuable contribution to building international consensus and forging stronger global partnerships.

You are also helping to lead the way on South-South Cooperation.

In addressing the pressing global challenges of our time, it is clear that mutual cooperation, including South-South and triangular cooperation, benefits both developed and developing countries alike.

For all your efforts, I commend you.

Such contributions are particularly important at this critical juncture in world history, when cooperation and partnership are the best – the only – way forward.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As President of the General Assembly, I would like to briefly share with you a few of my main global concerns, which I believe are also of shared interest with Argentina.

For this session of the General Assembly, I have identified “Mediation – The peaceful settlement of disputes” as the main theme. I have a vision on how to benefit from this concept and the path of the Alliance of Civilizations, to better serve the world peace.

The world today is increasingly complex and inter-twined.

The role of mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as stipulated in Chapter 6 of the UN Charter, are therefore more relevant now than ever before.

I am pleased to note that, at present, there is international momentum building around mediation.

On the 22nd of June last year, the General Assembly adopted its first-ever resolution on mediation. It was the same day I was elected President of the General Assembly. Furthermore, I have organized and addressed a series of meetings on mediation.

Related to mediation, I am, of course, well aware of one of the most pressing foreign policy issues for Argentina: the question of the Falkland Islands or the Malvinas.

I would like to take this opportunity to stress my earnest hope that both the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom will be able to resolve this dispute peacefully, and in accordance with international law.

It is imperative that the parties show restraint and avoid any escalation of tensions over this matter.

Should the parties agree, as President of the UN General Assembly, I stand ready to provide any support needed to resolve this dispute peacefully.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I also chose “Sustainable development and global prosperity”, as an area of focus this session. These are also issues of great concern for Argentina and the UN Membership as a whole.

I came here directly from Rio-Brazil, after participating in the historic UN Conference on Sustainable Development – Earth Summit.

An important agreement on the “The Future We Want”, was reached after extensive engagement by Member States.

The voice of civil society was also heard, I’m aware that it is hard to have full satisfaction prevailing among 193 countries, but this outcome is the path, not the end. We can build on it to add what we hope for after 2015 – the target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

In moving forward, the General Assembly, as the world’s most universal, legitimate body, will continue to play a central role, to help define and establish universal sustainable development goals beyond 2015.

Ladies and gentlemen,

A critical issue related to sustainable development and global prosperity, an area of focus as well, is the state of the world economy.

Though Argentina has experienced the aftermath of the world economic and financial crisis, you have managed to deal with it because of your strong desire to protect your legacy.

No country has been completely immune from the crisis.

To tackle this issue successfully, the world needs to come together and act collectively.

For this reason, last month I co-organized, with the UN Secretary-General a high-level thematic debate on the State of the World Economy.

Among the key messages from that event, is the fact that both developed and developing countries have remained adversely affected in the aftermath of the crisis.

However, the International Community has the tools to collectively recover. I'm also in contact with the G-20, of which Argentina is a member.

My objective is to improve the complementary and mutually beneficial deliberations of the General Assembly and the G-20, bearing in mind the UN General Assembly's unique legitimacy as the most representative world body.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no global development without strong United Nations. Therefore, I also chose the issue of UN Reform and Revitalization as an area of focus for this session. It also includes an active Security Council and a stronger General Assembly. Series of activities were also conducted in this regard, under my vigilant guidance.

The fourth pillar I chose is on how the international community can respond to disasters and catastrophic situations.

Disasters can be either man made or natural, in both cases, the International Community should in a better readiness and better equipped to deal with their scenarios.

Dear All,

Before I conclude, I would like to touch the most urgent issue before us all: the situation in the Middle East.

It is not only the worrying Arab-Israeli conflict.

But I refer specifically to the deeply-troubling crises in Syria.

The conditions in Syria are horrendous.

This was highlighted earlier this month at a meeting of the General Assembly which I convened on this matter in New York.

We heard briefings from the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, His Excellency Mr. Nabil Al-Araby, and the Joint Special Envoy for the United Nations and the League of Arab States, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, as well as the United Nations Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

Unfortunately, the violence and killing of innocent civilians is ongoing, despite the genuine efforts of the UN and the international community to help bring peace, security and order to Syria.

I am convinced that the international community is mindful of its responsibility to act firmly through the UN, to protect the Syrians.

We need honest and sincere engagement and results-oriented plan.

We must move promptly and take action - time is of the essence.

The lives of tens of thousands of Syrians, and the stability of the region, are at stake. At stake as well is the credibility of the United Nations.

I hope that with unity of purpose the United Nations can succeed in helping the people of Syria to resolve this crisis.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to close by thanking you once again for hosting me here in Buenos Aires.

It takes tow to tango! So look forward to continuing to work with Argentina, as we strive to build a more peaceful, more prosperous and more just world for all.

I thank you. Muchas Gracias.