

His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser President of the General Assembly

Remarks General Assembly Plenary Meeting on Mediation

13 September 2012, New York

His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Ambassador Jan Grauls of Belgium,
Ambassador Jean-Francois Zinsou of Benin,
Ambassador Eduardo Ulibarri of Costa Rica,
Ambassador Libran Cabactulan of the Philippines,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

One year ago, we inaugurated the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Back then, I proposed “the role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means” as the theme for our session.

Due to my strong belief in this concept, I expressed my hope that focusing on this issue would enhance debate and deepen cooperation on this important topic, which lies at the heart of the work of the United Nations.

Today, I see with great satisfaction that the past year has been extraordinary in terms of the role of mediation.

We have hosted a number of meetings here at the UN.

Conferences and seminars dealing with different aspects of this matter have also been organized outside of New York.

All these activities culminated in the informal high level meeting of the General Assembly on 23 May.

This meeting was attended by Ministers and other eminent mediators, representing different regions.

Throughout the session, from the General Debate in September up to now, our aim has been to identify the challenges we are facing, to find out answers and solutions, and come up with some alternative tools and mechanisms.

Brilliant ideas and proposals have been put forward by Member States and other actors, on how to render mediation more effective.

I am very pleased to see that those ideas have already started to be developed, and concrete deliberations and actions have been taken place to materialize the proposals. Today's adoption of the follow-up resolution on mediation reflects the eagerness of the membership to actively pursue this issue.

I am grateful to Member States for their continued interest and support, as well as for their active engagement with this crucial matter.

At this stage, let me express my appreciation to Finland and Turkey, for their leadership as the two co-chairs of the Group of Friends of Mediation, and for their support to me on developing this theme during my mandate.

During all the meetings and other activities, we have also seen, once again, the important role in mediation of regional organizations and civil society, in addition to that of the United Nations and Member States.

Since every situation is unique, we should benefit as much as possible from the comparative advantages of different actors.

This requires seamless cooperation among all.

Excellencies,

Today is a special day for mediation.

First, the Secretary-General is presenting his report and guidance, and then, we will proceed with the adoption of the resolution on mediation.

Taking this opportunity, I wish to reiterate, on behalf of all of you, our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his genuine leadership and personal commitment to the concept of mediation.

I would also like to express my satisfaction for acknowledging my role as the President of the General Assembly in his report.

His concise report before us provides an in-depth and comprehensive analyses. I believe that the guidance, which he put together after extensive consultations with all relevant actors, will be very useful for mediators at different levels.

Excellencies,

I would like to share with you a vision I have always believed in. In my view, dialogue among civilizations offers a complementary approach to preventing and peacefully resolving conflicts.

Therefore, during the past year, I have placed a special focus on the Alliance of Civilizations.

Today, it is no secret that some disputes are either emanating from cultural or religious differences, misperceptions and misunderstandings, or gets deepened due to different methodologies and ideologies.

On such situations, the role of the Alliance could be particularly critical.

I see more room in this sphere that should be further elaborated upon.

Parallel to this, the Alliance should be strengthened so that it can more effectively fulfil its noble mission.

I will continue building useful understanding based on these facts until the last days of my mandate and beyond.

Excellencies,

Some past and current crises have shown that if mediation and other peaceful means are used at a timely and early stage, it will be cost-effective, it will lead to saving innocent lives, and it will alleviate the suffering of civilians, particularly women and children.

It is necessary that we learn from our experiences and employ mediation in a more efficient manner, because it is the best way out in a crisis situation, if used as preventive measure.

On our part at the General Assembly, we should keep the momentum building on mediation, and continue to focus on the challenges before us.

It is no secret that during this session, we exercised the concept of mediation in practical cases either here at the General Assembly or through field trips on the ground.

In this regard, I am particularly pleased that the next President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Vuk Jeremic, proposed the settlement of disputes by peaceful means as the theme for the General Debate this year.

I sincerely believe that, building on the achievements so far within and outside the United Nations, the energy, vision and commitment of the President-elect will further the concept of the peaceful resolution of conflicts for the common good of the humanity and for a more peaceful future for all.

Thank you.