



PERMANENT MISSION OF TURKEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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ADDRESS BY

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to the

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Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary General,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Greetings to you all.

It gives me great pleasure to address once again this august body where we unite our goals and labors for a better and brighter future.

I wish to wholeheartedly congratulate our good friend, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, H.E. Mr. Kerim, on his election to preside over this global forum.

I would like also, on this occasion, to pay tribute to the Secretary General H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon and once again wish him every success in his current position. Turkey's support will always be behind him.

Our world today needs, more than ever before, effective cooperation to find common solutions to our global problems, to replace desperation with hope, poverty with prosperity, injustice with justice and violence with peace around the world.

The United Nations, created precisely for this mission, is the only international forum that can possibly, with our collective resolve, lead us to these objectives. The UN is also the source of international legitimacy for our actions to these ends.

However, it is incumbent on us the Member States, to render the Organization stronger and more effective, to furnish it with the necessary means and structures so that it can competently tackle the many challenges of our century.

Here, I believe we need to be more resolved and bold in our actions while adopting more forthcoming and creative approaches.

Although significant structural reforms have been realized to date, this process is far from completed. The reform process must continue and structural and functional adjustments should be made to respond to needs that may arise.

We must bear in mind that **reforming the Security Council** in such a way that would command the widest possible consensus would also reflect positively on the legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations itself.

Mr. President,

I wish on this occasion to also reconfirm Turkey's **candidature to the Security Council** at the elections to be held next year. My country which is committed to the ideals enshrined in the Charter and constructively contributes to the maintenance of global peace at a strategic junction where different continents and cultures meet, has not been represented on the Council for almost half a century.

I genuinely believe that with the valuable support of the Member States, Turkey can assume a distinctive and constructive role with its European and Asian identity in harmonizing and reconciling different views within the Security Council, just as in its efforts to facilitate harmony between different cultures.

Mr. President,

We have in fact reached an important stage in the implementation phase of the **Alliance of Civilizations** initiative under the auspices of the UN Secretary General, which we co-sponsor together with Spain.

We are determined to make our vision of global harmony become a reality through the implementation of concrete projects under the strong leadership of the High Representative, former President of Portugal, H.E. Mr. Sampaio and with the support I am confident the international community will not deny this initiative.

The meeting held at the UN with the Alliance Group of Friends earlier this week served to renew our hope and confidence in the promising future of this initiative.

Mr. President,

The vast majority of international problems of high priority on the agenda of the United Nations are taking place in our immediate environment, the scene of important tensions and transformation.

We are exerting every effort to constructively contribute to the resolution of all these disputes that directly impact Turkey although we are not party to any of them. In doing so, we seek to utilize the many possibilities offered by our strategic disposition, our accumulated knowledge and insight of the region, our cultural and historical ties as well as our vast experience in peacekeeping.

Our highest priority is to restore stability in our region.

In this connection, Turkey will resolutely pursue its efforts to serve as an important component of peace and stability as well as to promote multi-dimensional relations with all its neighbors. The encouraging level we have reached in our relations with **Greece** today as a result of the process of rapprochement we have been pursuing for nearly 10 years is the tangible outcome of this resolve.

Likewise ensuring a dignified place within the international community for a territorially intact, nationally unified and democratic **Iraq** at peace with itself and its neighbors is at the top of our endeavors to restore stability in our region.

In line with our desire to realize this common vision, we continue to diversify our cooperation with the Iraqi Government and support the process of political dialogue and national reconciliation in this country.

The Neighboring Countries of Iraq platform launched upon Turkey's initiative and later expanded at the meeting held in Sharm-El Sheikh to also include the P5 and G8 is similarly intended to serve such a purpose. The next Ministerial meeting of the Expanded Neighboring Countries will be hosted by Turkey at the beginning of November.

Mr. President,

Another major source of instability in our region is **the Israeli-Palestinian dispute**. We regard the question of Palestine, with wide repercussions both in and beyond the region, as the crux of all ills in the Middle East. The political rift within Palestine itself has further complicated the situation. A lasting political solution to the question of Palestine and a peace with Israel on the basis of a two-state solution will have important implications for regional as well as global stability. We believe that a negotiated settlement to this long standing dispute will also reflect positively on the resolution of other problems beleaguering the region.

We stand ready to support in every way possible the parties in the efforts to revive the peace process and to contribute to the prospective international meeting to be convened for this purpose.

We hope to see the ongoing political crisis in **Lebanon** promptly overcome through dialogue among the different factions. We will continue our intense efforts, including our contributions to UNIFIL, to assist in restoring stability in this country.

Mr. President,

We will also continue to invest in the democratic, free and prosperous future of the friendly people of **Afghanistan**. Our commitment to the security of the country by assuming the command of ISAF twice since its inception and currently of the Regional Command in Kabul, together with our contributions to the reconstruction effort through significant infrastructure projects are the concrete expression of the challenging mission we have undertaken in Afghanistan. The activities of the Turkish PRT in the province of Wardak carrying out its functions under dangerous security conditions are also part of this effort.

Moreover, the process of Tripartite Summits we have initiated with the participation of Afghanistan and Pakistan in the desire to enhance peace and stability in the region is helping to restore confidence between these two neighboring countries.

On the other hand, frozen conflicts pending a resolution continue to jeopardize regional peace and stability in the **South Caucasus**. Solutions to be found through peaceful means to existing frozen conflicts should be based on the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan and Georgia.

In order to realize our vision of peace, stability and economic prosperity for the region, we not only seek to contribute to the resolution of these frozen conflicts, but at the same time continue to invest in the infrastructure of regional cooperation through significant energy and transportation projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum oil and natural gas pipelines and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad.

Mr. President,

At this juncture where uncertainty regarding the final status of **Kosovo** persists, we continue to maintain our view that we must mobilize all efforts to find a just and sustainable solution to this question. Turkey has currently assumed the command of the KFOR Multinational Task Force-South in the region.

Turkey also performs noble duties in the name of **peacekeeping** in almost all the regions cited above. Through its participation in various peacekeeping operations conducted under the banner of the UN, NATO, the EU and the OSCE, Turkey has proven its capacity to significantly contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

In this connection Turkey is also favorably considering participation in UNAMID in **Darfur** established in accordance with Security Council resolution 1769, whose adoption we highly welcomed.

Mr. President,

To the extent that we can stop and prevent the recurrence of conflicts that exhaust our energy and resources, we will be able to better focus on global problems that will define the common fate of humankind.

At the top of these problems is the issue of **climate change** that you, Mr. President, have in a very timely manner designated as the main theme of the General Assembly this year.

We discussed this issue requiring urgent collective action in all its aspects during the high-level meeting that I also had the opportunity to personally attend earlier this week.

The most conclusive outcome of this meeting was that we must all assume our fair share of responsibility in effective international cooperation to find solutions to global warming and climate change which pose as never before a grave threat to humankind's survival.

Another grim reality in this context is that the developing world bearing the least responsibility for climate change will be most adversely affected by its consequences.

It is therefore incumbent on us all to assist, to the best of our ability, the developing countries in overcoming the many overwhelming challenges that they confront.

To this end, Turkey is rapidly becoming a donor country with the significant development, technical and humanitarian assistance it has been providing in recent years. The **development aid** provided by Turkey through official and private sources reached 1.7 billion Dollars last year. We intend to continue our contributions to the relevant UN Funds as well as at the bilateral level.

The **Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference** hosted by Turkey in Istanbul this past summer is another concrete expression of our resolve to assist the developing countries and enable them to take full advantage of the benefits of globalization. We are already taking steps to follow up on the outcome of this conference.

Our commitment to peace and development in **Africa** also finds expression in our development assistance to the continent coordinated through the branch offices of the Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) established since 2005 in Ethiopia, Sudan and Senegal. The Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit we will host next year and our participation in seven different UN and EU peacekeeping missions in Africa are other concrete examples to this effect.

Turkey also seeks to diversify and expand its network of political and commercial cooperation with the countries of **South Asia, the Far East and Pacific** region as well as **Latin America and the Caribbean**.

Mr. President,

Terrorism continues to threaten the security of all free nations. An act of terror committed in any part of the world in essence targets us all as it constitutes a heinous crime against humanity. We condemn in the strongest terms this scourge that recognizes no national boundaries. As the Prime Minister of a nation who has experienced first hand the bitter consequences of terrorism, I renew from this rostrum my appeal to the international community for an enhanced collective commitment and cooperation in the combat against this threat to humanity in its entirety.

Considering the sophisticated new technologies terrorist elements are utilizing today, effective international cooperation to prevent the **proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction** takes on a whole new meaning and urgency. Turkey strongly supports UN led efforts to intensify international cooperation in preventing their proliferation.

Mr. President,

Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus have been supporting the efforts to find a comprehensive settlement to the **Cyprus problem** under the Good-Offices Mission of the UN Secretary General on the basis of the well established UN parameters. The UN remains the sole platform for a solution.

It should be recalled that the Comprehensive Settlement Plan of the former UN Secretary General emerged in 2004 as a result of extensive negotiations between the parties and was submitted to a simultaneous referendum on both sides of the Island. The Turkish side overwhelmingly voted in favor of the Secretary General's Plan, whose impartiality can not in any way be called into question. The Greek Cypriots, however, were misled by their leadership to reject the Plan.

Despite the constructive attitude displayed by the Turkish side, no progress has been achieved since towards a settlement due to the intransigence of the Greek Cypriot side. This clearly attests to the need to urgently resume comprehensive negotiations under an expedited process within a given timeframe.

In the meeting held between the two leaders on the Island on the 5th of September 2007, President Talat of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus proposed to resume without further delay substantial negotiations to reach a comprehensive settlement by the end of 2008. This proposal, however, was rejected by the Greek Cypriot side. Should a solution be genuinely sought on the Island, this proposal merits serious consideration.

The international community should not only support the will displayed by the Turkish side to reach a comprehensive settlement, but also encourage the Greek Cypriot side to be more forthcoming in this regard. Credence should no longer be given to the Greek Cypriot side's tactical ploys that give the false impression of desiring a solution when in fact all they really seek is to delay and obstruct such an outcome.

The unjust restrictions imposed on the Turkish Cypriots which have no legal or moral premise continue with no end in sight.

Accordingly, the former UN Secretary General in his report of 28 May 2004, called for the lifting of all restrictions imposed on the Turkish Cypriots. In this regard, we welcome that the Secretary General H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon has stood by his predecessor's conclusions in the latest UNFICYP report.

We expect the international community to take urgent steps to remove these restrictions.

Meanwhile, the attempts of the Greek Cypriot side to conclude agreements on the delimitation of the exclusive economic zone and to conduct oil and gas research in the East Mediterranean in contravention of international law will not only adversely affect stability in the region but also further complicate the search for a solution to the Cyprus problem.

Mr. President,

The replica of the world's oldest known peace treaty, the Kadesh Treaty, donated to the United Nations by Turkey and on permanent display at the entrance of the Security Council, reminds us on a daily basis that the quest for lasting peace is as old as humankind itself.

I earnestly hope that the General Assembly this year will be an occasion for promising initiatives that will bring us closer to this perpetual goal and lay the foundations of a better and brighter common future in unity and harmony.

In this regard I suggest we heed the words of Celalettin Rumi on this year that has been designated by UNESCO as the **Year of Mevlana** to commemorate the 800th anniversary of his birth. As suggested by Mevlana, if we wish to see the tree of our dreams bloom and bear fruit, we must first plant the seeds of our desire.

In concluding my comments with these thoughts, I wish the General Assembly every success in its work and pay my deepest respects to you all.