



**Permanent Mission of Germany
to the United Nations**

**Speech
by Dr Angela Merkel,
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany,
at the United Nations General Assembly
New York, 25 September 2007**

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Mr President,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Please accept my congratulations, Mr President, on your election as President of this 62nd session of the General Assembly. I wish you every success.

I would also like to express my thanks to the outgoing President for her dedicated work. I fully endorse the statement made by the EU Presidency.

Ladies and gentlemen,
We are currently experiencing a period of dramatic changes. Great opportunities are accompanied by considerable risks.

Global structures are changing. States, economies and societies are becoming networked as never before. That is what we call globalization.

The good thing about this development is that prosperity is increasing. More and more people are escaping from poverty.

The challenge this development poses is that not everyone has their fair share of this prosperity. There are considerable imbalances. We thus need a global awareness beyond national boundaries of our joint responsibility in order to master the major challenges facing our world.

Climate change is undoubtedly one of the central challenges facing humanity today.

Therefore, Mr President, I very much welcome your decision to make climate change the focus of this year's session of the General Assembly.

Never before were the facts so clear, was the consensus among scientists so great or the need for action so indisputable. Each and every country is affected by the impact of climate change. No one country can tackle it alone. Not to take action would incur immense costs and cause new global conflicts.

Now what does that mean for the way ahead? In quite concrete terms, it means any contribution from individual or groups of states is welcome. However, I would like to add

most emphatically that such contributions can only complement a post-Kyoto agreement under the auspices of the United Nations. They can never replace it.

This session of the UN General Assembly therefore has to set the course for the next vital step: the climate conference in Bali. Environment ministers will have to agree in Bali on a clear road map so that negotiations can be successfully concluded by 2009.

There are three key elements:

- a common understanding on the scale of emissions reduction,
- a common understanding on fair national contributions and
- a common understanding on the instruments we should use both to protect the climate and to foster economic growth.

The scope of the need for action is becoming increasingly clear. We must at least halve global emissions by the middle of the century.

For this we have a clear guiding principle: the principle of common but differentiated responsibility.

Industrialized countries must embrace ambitious absolute reduction targets. During the German Presidency, the European Union adopted bold targets for 2020. All industrialized countries will have to drastically reduce their per-capita emissions.

Emerging economies will first of all have to decouple their economic growth from emissions. In the long term, per-capita emissions in both industrialized countries and emerging economies will have to converge at a level compatible with our global climate protection target.

Such a process of long-term convergence offers all countries scope to develop. It does not demand too much of anyone. And there is no doubt in my mind that only a UN agreement can provide the dependability this will require.

Climate protection will therefore be a litmus test of the international community's ability to act effectively in the 21st century.

For, ladies and gentlemen, on our own continent we Europeans experience on a daily basis that although any individual country is too small to make a real difference, together we can achieve much.

In the light of our experience, I believe three principles are of crucial importance to our common future.

First, economic strength and social responsibility belong together.

This principle applies both to how states treat their citizens and how states treat each other. It emphasizes the right and freedom of each individual to achieve their full potential. At the same time it upholds cohesion and solidarity, while categorically rejecting isolationism and protectionism.

That is why we are seeking a balanced and comprehensive agreement on multilateral trade. In concrete terms, this means that we have to bring the Doha Round to an early and successful conclusion. Too much time has been wasted. We have to seize the last chance for negotiations this autumn.

Our aim must be transparent financial markets and effective protection of intellectual property, as well as minimum legal and social standards. For I am convinced that there can be no fair competition without common ground rules.

We can only achieve cohesion and solidarity in a global development partnership. With the Millennium Development Goals, the international community has laid down binding quantifiable targets and deadlines for the first time.

Together with its EU partners, Germany has undertaken to reach the United Nations' 0.7 per cent target no later than 2015. We stand by these pledges.

There can be no doubt that genuine partnership places all sides under an obligation, an obligation to step up the fight against corruption, to aim for better governance and to better protect human rights. We want to support Africa in particular. There have been encouraging developments on the continent but also, unfortunately, serious setbacks, for example in Zimbabwe.

"Growth and responsibility in the world economy" is therefore also the motto guiding this year's German G8 Presidency.

The second principle is as follows: We have to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations.

In my view, there is absolutely no doubt – the United Nations is *the* place where binding joint responses can be found to global challenges.

But the United Nations is in need of reform. This is true above all of the Security Council. In many crisis situations it needs to be able to come up quickly with universally binding proposals. To do this, it must have international legitimacy. However, the present composition of the Security Council no longer reflects the world today. There is therefore no alternative to adapting it to political realities.

My country has over the past years been actively involved in this debate. Germany is prepared to assume more responsibility, and to take on a permanent seat on the Security Council.

What we need now are tangible results. We are by no means only at the start of our endeavours. The UN reform process has already produced some results, such as the report of the High-level Panel on development and the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission.

But time is short. There are numerous crises we have to deal with right now. And notwithstanding the many differing factors that have led to these crises, they all have one thing in common – they can only be solved multilaterally. The key to ending them is unity of purpose.

This is particularly true with respect to Iran. Iran has continuously worked on its nuclear programme in clear contradiction of the demands of the IAEA and the UN.

Nobody should be in the slightest doubt as to the dangerous nature of this programme. Iran is ignoring UN Security Council resolutions and is blatantly threatening Israel.

Let's not fool ourselves. If Iran were to acquire the nuclear bomb, the consequences would be disastrous – first and foremost for the existence of Israel, secondly for the entire region and ultimately for all of us in Europe and the world who attach any importance to the values of

liberty, democracy and human dignity. That is why we have to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear arms.

The international community must not allow itself to be divided and its decisive response to Iran's provocations undermined in any way. The world does not have to prove to Iran that Iran is building a nuclear bomb. Iran has to convince the world that it is not striving towards such a bomb.

Ladies and gentlemen, each and every German Chancellor before me has shouldered Germany's special responsibility for the existence of Israel. I, too, pledge to live up to this responsibility that our history has bequeathed us.

It is one of the fundamental principles that guides my country. In other words, Israel's security is non-negotiable for me as German Chancellor. And that being the case, we have to do more than pay lip-service to it.

Together with its partners Germany will continue to seek a diplomatic solution. With this aim in mind, Germany will – if Iran does not come around – firmly advocate additional, harsher sanctions.

Unity of purpose is also the key in the fight against international terrorism, and especially in our efforts aimed at security and stability in Afghanistan.

It is also vital for ensuring a peaceful future in Kosovo, where NATO and the EU play a particularly active role. We want a solution under UN auspices. All parties are now called upon to show a willingness to compromise.

We also strongly support the efforts of the Middle East Quartet for peace in that region. Germany is a staunch advocate of the vision of two states in secure borders and in peace, for the Jewish people in Israel and for the Palestinians in Palestine. We welcome the fact that both parties are continuing their talks with great vigour, above all with a view to the Middle East Conference scheduled for November.

The third principle is that we have to strengthen our shared immutable values.

In my opinion, one of the great dangers of the twenty-first century is that crises and conflicts could give rise to a clash of civilizations. This must not happen. For this reason, I plead for tolerance.

For tolerance as properly understood, not "anything goes" masquerading as tolerance. Everybody must be able to follow his or her own path – but it must be a path within the international community, not outside it.

This path has clearly been departed from wherever massive human rights violations are committed, as in Darfur. A human tragedy is being played out there. Too much time has already been squandered. Now is the time to act. The crimes perpetrated there must not go unpunished.

This path has been departed from in Myanmar, where human rights have likewise been disregarded for years. I urge the government not to use force against the peaceful demonstrators and finally to make way for a democratic future for the country.

This path has also been departed from when political assassinations are carried out, as in the case of Rafik Hariri or the recent cowardly attack just a few days ago in Lebanon.

The Hariri tribunal must commence its work with all possible speed. I call on Syria to grant Lebanon diplomatic recognition at long last.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my fundamental conviction that we must time and again muster the strength to assert our shared values of freedom and democracy. To do this, we need an unshakeable foundation.

We have this foundation. It is the Charter of the United Nations.

It was written when Europe and wide swathes of the world lay in ruins. At the most basic level, it is a statement that notwithstanding all the dark chapters and tortuous turns of our history, universal human rights do exist.

In other words, what it all comes down to is respecting and protecting the dignity of each individual person. That is the underlying reason why we assemble here each year and work together for the future of our peoples.

Germany will do its utmost to further this work. We look forward to fruitful cooperation with all partners in the United Nations.