

**Permanent Mission of the Republic
of Iraq to the United Nations**

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نيويورك

***The Statement of His Excellency Mr. Nuri
Kamel Al-Maliki, Prime Minister
Of the Republic of Iraq
Before
The 62nd Session of the General Assembly***

New York

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**Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Nori Kamil Al-Maliky's Speech
At the 62nd Session of the United Nation's General Assembly**

Mr. President – Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am honored to address you as the first Prime Minister of a constitutionally permanent government representing Iraq, its people, and its aspirations in cementing the foundations of democracy, peace, freedom and cooperation with the international community.

I come to you carrying the burdens of the people of the Valley of Two Rivers who built the most ancient civilizations, established the first laws, and who today offer humanity a high example in sustaining life, facing challenges, persistent in protecting our young democratic experience.

The Iraqi people lived isolated from the world, in the shadow of dictatorship for thirty five years. There was no freedom of thought or belief, no multiple party system, no free elections, no democratic institutions, no communication systems, and no media except that which was controlled by the intelligence agencies.

Millions of victims in Iraq suffered throughout this era in adventurous wars with two neighboring countries: Iran and Kuwait. Genocidal mass murder was committed inside Iraq such as what happened during al-Anfaal campaign and in Halabja. In addition were mass graves, horrific prison cells, the detention camps as well as the immense destruction that plagued the infra-structure of different governmental institutions.

Today in Iraq there are hundreds of parties that are active within 20 political alliances. There are more than 6000 civil organizations, hundreds of newspapers and magazines, 40 local and satellite TV stations, as well as foreign media correspondent offices from all over the world working under no pre-conditions.

This New Iraq, ladies and gentlemen, is what is targeted today. Terrorism kills civilians, journalists, actors, thinkers, and professionals; it attacks universities, marketplaces, and libraries; it blows up mosques and churches and destroys the infra-structure of State institutions. We consider terrorism an extension of the fallen dictatorship, whether it may vary in its outside form or by the gangs that carry it out. Terrorism aims at aborting the political process, and igniting sectarian dissension as a prelude to hijack Iraq back into the era of tyranny; oppression and backwardness.

Car bombs and explosive vests in public places and the display of decapitated heads on TV are all letters of threat that terrorists send to the world community, the bloody chapters of which were executed in Algeria, Spain, England, Lebanon, Turkey ... and here in New York. We are steadfast and determined to exterminate terrorism in Iraq so that it does not spread around the countries of the world, repeating the tragedy.

Iraq, that carries the greater burden in confronting terrorism calls upon the nations of the world to help and unite its efforts towards fighting terrorism. Our battle aims at providing security, stability and prosperity as well as protecting our democratic experience. We are determined to be victorious in our battle which will be a victory for humanity.

This fierce attack of terror against Iraq since the fall of the dictatorship regime has not stopped our people, throughout three epic elections, from laying the ground work for a unique democratic experience in Iraq's history and the region where as the Constitution was voted upon, a Prime Minister was elected and the National Unity Government was established.

The new Iraq that lives a young democratic experience is governed by constitutional institutions, where freedom of opinion, belief and expression are all respected. This Iraq will not retreat from its democratic choice for which our people have paid a very high price. This position necessitates the support and cooperation from the world's nations, so that Iraq can build a modern state that guarantees justice, equality, and a respect for religious, intellectual, sectarian, and ethnic pluralism.

Our people, who have enjoyed the taste of freedom after eras of tyranny and oppression, will continue the road towards building a State of institutions, reinforcing the authority of the Law, respecting human rights and the active participation of women in all areas.

The national reconciliation and dialogue initiative that we have launched upon assuming our responsibility as the Prime Minister of National Unity Government did not come from a void. Its strength emerges from the Iraqi people's civilization and heritage that have made great contributions to humankind. Iraqis have lived in peace, brotherhood and forgiveness since the dawn of history. Their religious, sectarian and ethnic diversity were elements of strength, reinforcing national unity.

We look at national reconciliation as a life boat, a perpetual peace project and a safe harbor for the political process and the democratic experience. We also believe that

national reconciliation is not the responsibility of the government alone. It is a group responsibility held by political powers, intellectual leaders, religious leaders, the educated, civil organizations and all the active powers in the Iraqi arena. National reconciliation is our strategic choice that has saved our country from slipping into the pit of a sectarian war; a war that was planned by the enemies of freedom and democracy after blowing up the tomb of the Two 'Askari Imams in Samirra.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

National reconciliation is not a dinner prepared for disputers or even a sip of medicine as some might think. It is a realistic vision that remedies the heavy remnants that were left behind by the fallen regime in all areas; it lays the foundation for political, social, economic progress and the security that we strive for. Furthermore, it cements the principles of the new political system.

National reconciliation is the olive branch that blossomed into the formation of support councils in many of our provinces and Iraqi cities. It also was successful in amalgamating about 28,000 citizens from our Iraqi tribes with our military efforts to combat terrorism. It resulted in regaining security in our cities and villages. Amongst them is al-Anbaar Province that was liberated from al-Qaida terrorist organization. The terrorists fled from it to face a defeat, this time in the Diala Province. Thus, al-Qaida lost its safe havens, one right after the other.

National reconciliation is stronger than the weapons of terrorism. It has succeeded in encompassing more than 14,000 people that were members of armed groups that splintered off from al-Qaida. These fighters stood next to our armed forces and the multi-national forces battling with al-Qaida, delivering devastating hits.

National reconciliation transcends the hatred and fears of the past. The National Unity Government has completed the proposed Accountability and Justice Law and has forwarded it to the Parliament as a substitute to the de-Baathification Law. In order to begin a fresh new page, tens of thousands of former members of the disbanded agencies have been returned to their jobs, irrespective of their party affiliations. Seventy three thousand officers and other ranking army individuals have either received retirement funds or have been reappointed. In addition, monetary grants were distributed to 193,000 army officers and other ranking members of the military.

What has been realistically accomplished through the continuous mobilization of the national reconciliation is considered to be an important success, in contrast to the great challenges that face Iraq and in comparison to the experiences of people who have suffered from dictatorships, civil and sectarian wars.

We affirm to you that the acts of sectarian violence in Iraq are not amongst society's components, but rather amongst extremists and fanatics from this group or that. We have been successful in containing this problem to a large degree. The average number of sectarian killings has decreased. Security and stability have been restored in many hot places. This has helped in the return of thousands of displaced families to their homes. We are determined to fight any and all outlaws irrespective of their sectarian or political affiliations. Our armed forces have been adamant at establishing law and order, as well as instilling a sense of respect for the government in many provinces which have diverse religious, sectarian and ethnic affiliations.

Our security and military agencies have experienced an accelerated growth in their skills and capabilities while confronting terrorist organizations, militias and criminal gangs. They have also proven their capability in terms of security in eight Iraqi provinces. However, there is a need for more development in order to be quickly able to take the responsibility of security in Iraq's entirety, from the multi-national forces. We are anxious to assume the responsibility of security entirely to protect the democratic gains of our people. We will work towards making sure that the performance of our armed forces will be professional, and that their loyalty will be to our country, not to a party, sect or ethnicity.

Establishing total sovereignty over our land is a top priority goal for our government's program. We have come a long way in training and equipping our armed forces in order to take over the security responsibilities from the multi-national forces all by itself. We are working towards achieving this goal at the same and while we are finalizing the readiness of our armed forces.

In addition to these achievements, the National Unity Government has begun the process of reconstruction. We have voted on the largest budget in Iraq's contemporary history, to the amount of 42 billion dollars. With the cooperation of the Parliament, the Investment Law has been approved. This is considered a progressive step to uplift and boost the Iraqi

economy, moving from a central based economy to a market free enterprise economy. This will assist in meeting the needs of our people for development, prosperity and affluence.

The government also completed a proposed law for oil and gas. If approved by the Parliament, this law will become a guarantee for the fair distribution of wealth, since oil is considered the sole property of all Iraqis.

The government continues to complete the implementation of other proposed laws in different areas. We have taken practical steps to improve our people's quality of life, increase employee and retirement salaries, combat unemployment and expand the activities of the network for social welfare. The government is determined that the upcoming year will be earmarked to promote the services sector in order to alleviate the hardships that citizens endure.

We understand that these promising steps do not meet our entire ambitions, and that we have a long way to achieve our goals for a secure, stable and prosperous Iraq. We hope that the international community will support Iraq and help it achieve these noble goals.

Respected Audience:

We believe that security is a progressively integrated system. A secure and stable Iraq will be in the best interest of the region and the world. We cautioned all countries in the region that the continued overflow of weapons, money, suicide bombers, and the spreading of "fatwas" inciting hatred and murder, will only result in disastrous consequences for peoples of region and the world.

Since the formation of the National Unity Government, we took the initiative to improve Iraq's relationship with neighboring countries. We were careful also to turn our common borders into peaceful and economically prosperous areas. The foreign policy of the new Iraq depends upon the permanent Constitution which does not allow its land to be used against its neighbors. It also refuses any interference with its internal affairs.

Today we feel optimistic that countries of the region realize the danger of the terrorist attacks against Iraq; that it is not in their interest for Iraq to be weak. A strong democratic Iraq will be a guarantee for security and stability in the region.

Because of its new policy, Iraq has become a meeting point for dialogue among feuding regional and international entities. We will march forward to reinforce this positive role,

adopting a policy that rests upon clearing the air, defusing crises and quelling the ghost of war and conflict in the region. We believe that a state of tension and instability will overshadow and affect security conditions, not only in Iraq but in the general region and the world.

Iraq, which was for the past decades been a center for tension in the region, is now qualified, and because of its material and human resources, to become a platform for regional and international economic cooperation. This will contribute to establishing an economic system which will provide development and prosperity for the people and countries of the region.

We also affirm our sincere desire to establish the best relationships with the international community. We feel that Iraq needs to open up to all countries, developing relationships and benefiting from the experiences of other democracies.

Rejoining the international community is a priority in our foreign policy. Our activities in the United Nations and its institutions have grown. Iraq was elected to head the third committee of the General Assembly, and a member of its Economic Council as well as to the position of Vice-President of the General Assembly. We were also successful in ending the term of the UNMOVIC mandate. We thank the member states of the United Nations for this support and cooperation.

I find it necessary, as I stand in front of leaders and representatives of the world's nations, to remind that the Iraqi people are still paying the price of the reckless politics of the past fallen regime as well as the consequences of international resolutions, especially those that relate to its weapons program and the invasion of the brother State of Kuwait.

These resolutions, which were exploited by the previous regime for political gains, have inflicted great harm upon the infra-structure, service sector, as well as the education and health systems. Our people look up to the international community for help to alleviate and lift the burdens of the destruction as well as relieve the people from the heavy bills of debt and compensations.

The Iraqi people will remember the countries that made sacrifices and stood next to them in bringing down the dictatorship regime. The people will remember who helped them during the transition period towards a democratic, pluralistic, federal system.

Furthermore, our people will always respect and appreciate the countries and

governments that support the political process and participate in the process of reconstruction.

Our striving to achieve economic progress and social justice, in partnership with the international community, was crowned with success upon the signing of the International Compact document and implementing all of its provisions. This document represents a new stage in the development of balanced relationships between Iraq and world governments. It is a point of departure towards building a democratic, pluralistic, federal Iraq whereby all of its citizens are equal, benefiting from a fair distribution of wealth, after clearing the burdens of debt, poverty, unemployment, administrative and financial corruption.

We are hopeful that the United Nations will mobilize its activities in Iraq. That will contribute to encourage the international community's openness towards intensifying their role in the areas of building, construction, development, supporting national reconciliation and the democratic experience.

Many regional conflicts and challenges can be resolved by constructive and focused dialogue. In order to maintain peace and security, and so that our region abandons the method of wars and adventure which have caused increased harm and suffering of the people; within this framework, we call for recognizing the rights of the Palestinian people and to help them establish their independent state, and for the return of occupied Arab lands according to international resolutions. The elimination of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East will guarantee a lasting and comprehensive peace. We call for the intensification of national, Arab and international efforts to assist Lebanon and its political powers towards transcending the state of division and to disallow interference into its internal affairs so that Lebanon can regain its national unity and cohesiveness.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Partnership and achieving peace, stability and prosperity require reinforcing the cooperative efforts of all countries of the world, and working together to achieve the noble goals of the United Nations. This also necessitates equal and balanced relationships among countries, evolving the global order to become fairer and more just in helping economically disadvantaged developing countries as well as reducing the developmental gap between the poor and rich nations of the world.

We are in support of having the United Nations play an active part on the international scene, solving crises through peaceful methods, after it attains all of the necessary elements and needed support that make it qualified to play this important role. We call upon the United Nations to adopt peaceful initiatives that help in defusing conflicts and saving people from the horrors of war in order to establish security and stability in the world. This will guarantee the rights and interests of all nations and will reinforce partnerships and cooperation amongst them. It will also provide the necessary environment for solving the challenges and crises that face the world in a fair and just way.

Finally, in the name of the Iraqi people I wish to congratulate Dr. Srgjan Kerim, President of 62nd session. I also want to thank the Secretary General of the United States, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon who played an important role in the United Nations' adoption of the International Compact document to help Iraq in implementing the reform programs in the political, economic and security areas. Furthermore, I offer my appreciation to all the countries that signed this Accord.

May the Almighty God bless you with His mercy and peace.