



S L O V A K I A

STATEMENT BY

**H.E. Mr. Ivan Gašparovič**

President of the Slovak Republic

in the General Debate of the 62<sup>nd</sup> session  
of the United Nations General Assembly

(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

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

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Mr President,  
Mr Secretary-General,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me please, Mr President, to congratulate you on your election as President of the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN General Assembly. I believe that under your presidency this organisation will make further progress in the reforms enabling prompt responses to the challenges of the international community.

From the outset I would like to thank your predecessor, Madam Sheikha Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, for her efforts in performing the challenging tasks on the agenda of the 61<sup>st</sup> session of the UN General Assembly.

Mr President,

The Slovak Republic fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Portugal on behalf of the European Union. In addition, I wish to make a contribution to the general debate on behalf of the Slovak Republic.

In spite of notable progress in some areas, the Slovak Republic does not feel content with the current pace and scope of the UN reform process. We think it is necessary to make the work of newly-created structures and institutions more dynamic, and to set the UN to ensure targeted prevention and solution of concrete problems and conflicts.

We appreciate the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission. We hope it will become a pivotal tool in post-conflict stabilisation. It should give the international community a vehicle to solve issues that extend the scope of crisis management.

Slovakia also advocates the effort for an overall reform in the system of human rights protection. We have welcomed the commencement of work by the Human Rights Council and we recognise its primary responsibility for promoting universal respect for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Within the ongoing process of institutional changes we expect the Council to effectively enforce its mandate pursuant to resolution 60/251 adopted by the General Assembly. The Slovak Republic advocates the idea of the protection and promotion of human rights both at national and international level. In this context we are prepared to assume our respective share of responsibility. We will be honoured to receive support of other UN Member States to the candidacy of the Slovak Republic to the Human Rights Council for years 2008-2011 in the election scheduled for spring 2008.

The Slovak Republic appreciates the measures designed to reform the UN Secretariat. We support the modernisation of the Secretariat's management system so that it can flexibly respond to current needs and challenges, and the accountability for the implementation of its tasks is strengthened. As a country participating in several UN-led peacekeeping missions we have also expressed our support for the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

The UN reform cannot be complete without also reforming the structure and working methods of the UN Security Council. Slovakia has been actively engaged in this reform effort during the term of its non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council. Membership of this UN body should reflect the changed geo-political reality. The number of both permanent and non-permanent Security Council members should increase and the Global South countries should acquire more seats. Germany and Japan have our explicit support in their ambition to become new permanent members of the UN Security Council. As a small country we also support such proposals in the category of non-permanent members that would restrict countries from so-called flip-flopping between categories.

Neither the UN General Assembly may evade the reform effort. It is necessary to strengthen its role and authority by focusing the attention of the General Assembly to real and acute problems of the current world. The General Assembly should also create mechanisms that would allow for the monitoring of the implementation of its decisions and at the same time would provide for the elimination of outdated measures that overburden its work. Thought should also be given to the representativeness of the bodies established by the UN General Assembly. Slovakia, as a member of the Eastern European Group of States, appreciates the election of Mr Srgjan Kerim as President of the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN General Assembly. At the same time, it should be emphasised that the Eastern European Group of States is the most dynamically growing regional group within the UN General Assembly, yet its representation in managerial positions in the UN Secretariat and in UN bodies does not reflect this situation. A prime example being the fact that the regional group of which the Slovak Republic is a member does not hold a single position of vice-president of the General Assembly this year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Besides the efforts aimed at reforming the UN, the Slovak Republic wants to pay special attention to the issue of security sector reform during the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Assembly. We believe that insufficient or absent security sector reform is often a source of conflicts, their catalyst, or even the cause of post-conflict countries lapsing back to a conflict stage. It should also be borne in mind that a well-governed security sector should, above all, ensure human security, which represents the foundation for stability, good governance and, ultimately, development of a country.

We are expecting a comprehensive report by the UN Secretary-General on security sector reform, which should become the basis of a more in-depth discussion on this issue within the UN. Therefore Slovakia has decided to initiate a thematic discussion on security sector reform during the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the General Assembly.

The Slovak Republic also expects the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN General Assembly to revitalise the discussion on disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Slovakia has had an opportunity to contribute to these efforts through its chairmanship in the 1540 Committee of the Security Council. In this context, in February 2007 Slovakia initiated also an open debate of the Security Council on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The destructive potential of weapons of mass destruction increases along with the growing threat of international terrorism. We therefore want to pay a special attention also to this threat to international peace and security. The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted in the General Assembly last year provides for wide-ranging international co-operation in this field.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Slovak Republic pays due attention to the economic and social aspects of the UN, where we wish to engage even more actively. In 2003, we submitted our candidacy to the UN Economic and Social Council for years 2010-2012. We will be pleased to receive other Member States' support to Slovakia's candidacy. As a new development aid donor we want to facilitate more effective cooperation with both beneficiary and donor countries, integrate the work of international agencies and make more efficient use of the existing UN capacities in this area. We wish to pay special attention to the development of post-conflict regions, which currently receive the largest portion of development aid. We believe that there will be room in the Economic and Social Council for Slovakia to utilise its experience in the field of security sector reform in the joint work with other bodies of the UN system.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the past two years Slovakia has for the first time ever worked as a UN Security Council member.

When adopting our decisions on the sensitive problems of the modern world we took into consideration the peculiarities of individual cases yet, at the same time, we sought to promote the value system of a European and trans-Atlantic community member. Slovakia will continue to work within the UN in the same spirit even after the completion of its current term in the UN Security Council. We also wish to make good use of the experience we have gained in our work in other UN bodies.

The Slovak Republic is frustrated that no solution to the Kosovo issue has been found yet. In our opinion Kosovo must not thwart the unification of European nations, nor set a negative precedent in terms of international law.

It is with hope that we view the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution granting a mandate for the deployment of a joint African Union and UN mission in Darfur. This unprecedented decision has moved the co-operation between the UN and regional organisations to a new level.

As regards the Middle East issue, Slovakia endorses a peaceful, fair and permanent solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The talks should result in the establishment of a viable Palestinian state which will coexist with Israel in an atmosphere of perpetual peace and security. In this context we appreciate the resumed dialogue between Israel and Palestine, and measures taken in this respect by the Quartet.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It has been seven years since our Millennium Session, where we discussed the future vision of life on our planet. It has not been seven rich nor seven poor years. The UN has made some progress. On the other hand, it has failed to cope with many challenges. We must do better together to make the future score more in the UN favour.

Thank you for your support and attention.