



SLOVENIA

Check against delivery

**ADDRESS
BY**

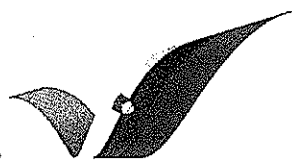
H.E. DR. DANILO TÜRK

President of the Republic of Slovenia

**at the
General Debate of the Sixty-sixth Session of the United Nations
General Assembly**

New York, 21 September 2011

SLOVENIA



Candidate for the United Nations Security Council
2012 - 2013

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

Let me, at the outset, congratulate H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly on his election and wish him every success in discharging his duties. Slovenia relies on your wisdom and experience, Mr. President. They will guide us in our endeavors and we look forward to working closely with you during this session.

I also wish to express our sincere gratitude to the outgoing President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly, H.E. Joseph Deiss, for his important contribution to the work of the UN General Assembly and strengthening the central role of the United Nations in global governance.

I wish to pay special tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon and thank him for the vision he presented and for his determined and tireless efforts to promote the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. We deeply appreciate his leadership in and wish him continued success in his second term in office as he guides the UN in these challenging times.

Mr. President,

Slovenia welcomes your decision to put the theme of mediation at the center of our deliberations at this General Assembly session. Indeed, no other theme seems more timely at this moment of search for an approach towards a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The European Union, to which Slovenia belongs, is currently fully engaged with high profile mediation in this context. The mediation under way has two aims: First, the revival of the peace process with a view to finding an early solution - a genuine and fair peace agreement involving two states, Israel and Palestine, which should live side by side in peace and security, and, second, as an immediate task, relevant to the United Nations, finding an adequate status for Palestine within the ranks of our common, global organization. These two aims are genuinely linked and the latter should be understood as supporting the former.

Mr. President,

Our common organization, the United Nations is committed to its inclusive character and universality of its membership. This is the spirit in which we see some of the significant developments of this year. We welcome the Republic of South Sudan as the newest member state of the United Nations. Our organization should render every assistance to the new member in its efforts to establish its structures and to serve the well being of its people.

We also welcome the decision of the General Assembly to grant the seat of Libya to the representatives of the Transitional National Council of Libya. This has established the much needed link between the United Nations and the people of Libya in their effort to build legitimate, democratic and effective institutions and to pursue the path of economic, social and political development in accordance with the wishes of the people. Yesterday, we discussed the forms of assistance in some detail at a special high level meeting. Today we can say that there is a fair chance of success for an effective cooperation between the people of Libya and the United Nations as well as the regional organizations, in particular the African Union and the Arab League. Together we shall be better able to assist. Slovenia is willing to continue to do its part in this framework.

Mr. President,

Political and security concerns are always an important priority for the United Nations. But they have to be considered against the background of other priorities, both long term and short term. The Organization has developed its engagements in the most important and the most difficult issues of environment and sustainable development. We need to make resolute steps toward a new and effective system to mitigate the effects of climate change and ensure the necessary adaptation. We hope that the meeting of UNFCCC in Durban later this year will bring us a step closer to the final agreement. The negative impacts of climate change are disproportionate. We should pay particular attention to the unique challenges faced by the Small Island Developing States whose characteristics make them one of the most vulnerable in the world to climate change.

The Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20 next year will be an opportunity to secure renewed political commitment to sustainable development, assess the progress of implementation of agreed commitments, and address new and emerging challenges. We should strengthen our efforts to develop a new concept that will capture economic growth, social development and environment protection. It is our duty to make a difference.

Maintaining our focus on the successful implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, we should pay particular attention to the special needs of Africa, chiefly those countries most in need. The Istanbul Program of Action offers concrete solutions for improving the progress of the Least Developed Countries.

In times when world economic crisis in the donor countries seems to continue unabated, aid increase proves to be difficult to attain. Improving of aid effectiveness is crucial. There can be no gain in the field of development if other policies, such as trade, agriculture, migration, climate change etc. cancel out the positive effects of development policies. In this regard, let me convey my hopes for the successful deliberations of the High-Level Forum in Busan later this year.

Mr. President,

Recent experience in the exercise of development activities has strengthened the understanding about the links between development and human rights. The concept of the right to development is gaining in substance and recognition. Moreover, specific areas of development have provided further evidence of the importance of this link. The role of women in development is a pertinent example. Experience and research by FAO, for example, have shown that empowerment of women in agriculture can reduce hunger by 30 per cent - an impressive result by any measure. Gender equality and empowerment of women is essential to promoting peace, security and development. Slovenia strongly supports the work of UN-Women, which will help to significantly boost UN efforts to promote gender equality, expand opportunities and tackle discrimination against women around the globe.

Another priority in the field of human rights which Slovenia values highly relates to the rights of the child and human rights education. This year, as President of the Executive Board of Unicef, Slovenia worked tirelessly to attain the universal ratification of the both Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The objective should be to ensure, through the UN instruments and national action an effective protection of the rights of the child and improve the well being of children in all parts of the world.

An important segment of this work relates to human rights education which helps empowering young people in their effort to secure their rightful place in the society. I remember when Slovenia and Costa Rica launched a human rights education campaign in the General Assembly Third Committee now almost twenty years ago. It is gratifying to see that today human rights are increasingly being included into official school curricula. But there is still so much more we need to do to incorporate human rights learning into societies as a life long process. The UN, its Human Rights Council and the General Assembly will, I am convinced, continue to make a significant contribution. I would like to express satisfaction about the adoption of the draft Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training in the UN Human Rights Council during the March session. I call on all states to support this important declaration and I am confident the General Assembly will adopt it unanimously later this autumn.

Mr. President,

Human rights concerns become most tragic in the case of the humanitarian disasters. The current famine in the Horn of Africa is a sad example. All actors of the international community, including my country, Slovenia, are already trying to help. However humanitarian assistance has to expand.

Mr. President,

I have referred to some of the areas of particular importance and some issues where Slovenia has been traditionally active. Our commitment to the United Nations remains strong. The UN is an organization of all and for all. For almost twenty years by now Slovenia has been working as a devoted UN member state. We have made proposals for specific action and enjoyed working with all other member states - large and small geographically close and those more distant. We also proposed a set of ideas for the reform of the Security Council and we hope that the coming year will see more resolute steps than was the case so far.

UN is an important hope for the world and an opportunity for its member states to bring the reality, complicated and onerous as it may be, closer to our hopes. It is in this spirit that Slovenia has presented its candidature for a non permanent seat on the Security Council. We hope for broad support and promise to act, if elected, as a faithful UN member state, aware of the responsibilities of the Security Council and of each of its members towards the entire Organization and its membership. We pledge our efforts, our judgment and our sense of fairness as our contribution to the United Nations.