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لدى الأمم المتحدة
نيويورك

Statement by

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Head of Delegation

before

the general debate of the 64th session
of the United Nations General Assembly

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Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate Your Excellency on your assumption of the presidency of the 64th session of the General Assembly. We are confident that your expertise in international political affairs will enable you to conduct its work efficiently and wisely. I wish you every success.

I also wish to thank your predecessor, Mr. d'Escoto Brockmann, for his successful leadership of the 63rd session of the General Assembly. I should also take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, for his great efforts in promoting peace, security and development in the world and for re-energizing the role of this international organization.

Mr. President,

Since the last session of the General Assembly, we have witnessed various developments and reactions. They left their negative impact on the international efforts aimed at addressing the threats and challenges which still face our world, particularly in the areas of security, stability and sustainable development. The chances of achieving a real peace for humanity were also impacted. Among the most notable threats and challenges whose consequences transcend national borders include the international financial crisis, the impact of climate change, the increase of unemployment and poverty, the outbreaks of infectious diseases, the lack of security and stability in a number of countries, the stalemate in the Middle East peace process and the continued primacy of military solutions over peaceful options and soft power in international affairs.

The enormous challenges facing our international community today require effective change and cooperation. This is in order to achieve full compliance of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law and a systematic development of relations among nations on the basis of justice and common interest. This will help us achieve peace, security and prosperity for Mankind.

The desired change should not be limited to current methods and techniques, but should also include core issues, international policies and affairs where wisdom, power and law should be in harmony. It should also include a suitable environment in which people live in dignity, security and peaceful coexistence without conflicts or discrimination or clash of civilizations.

Mr. President,

The current political, geographical and economic changes at the regional and international levels require the international community to expand the role of the United Nations to face the implications of these changes. This would require us to expand efforts aimed at reforming its main organs, particularly the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its other agencies and development programs. It would also require us to enhance cooperation among these international institutions and regional organizations.

In this context, we reiterate our commitment to contribute effectively to all plans, programs and international campaigns. This includes peacekeeping operations and preventive diplomacy missions led by the United Nations and aimed at peaceful settlement of existing differences and conflicts. We also reiterate our commitment to strengthening the mechanisms and the volume of humanitarian relief and assistance extended to afflicted and poor countries.

Mr. President,

We welcome the outcome of the summit that was held a few days ago by the General Assembly on climate change as well as the outcomes of other meetings held during the year regarding the financial crisis and energy. However, we believe that any comprehensive solution for these crises must take into consideration the particularities of each society. We also stress the need to improve efforts aimed at building a strong economic and financial international system that is capable of providing the necessary funding for economic development. This system should also assist in balancing public accounts, stabilizing credit markets and preventing international financial volatility and mitigating their effects on countries, particularly on the developing countries which already suffer from heavy debt burdens, in accordance with the internationally agreed upon development goals for the

new millennium. The United Arab Emirates has successfully contained the financial crisis through early and precautionary measures including monetary, financial and economic measures which ensured the protection of its national economy and continued the financing of its vital projects and productive base, including development assistance programs and foreign humanitarian assistance.

Measures of the economic support of the UAE Government aimed to restore the fine balance of its national economy and stimulate its growth and recovery. For that purpose, we implemented a number of effective programs in order to address and overcome the implications of this crisis.

You perhaps share our view that there are positive signs of recovery of some economies from the implications of the international economic crisis. But certainly, the transition from stagnation to recovery will not be easy. This is particularly true with the significant scars left by this crisis, which require concerted and sustained national and international efforts.

In spite of the impact of the financial and economic crisis on the economies and development projects in the region, the UAE continued its humanitarian, relief and development assistance programs in many countries. This was conducted either directly or through the donor groups and the UN office for Humanitarian Assistance. In addition, the UAE continued its contributions to the programs of regional agencies and international organizations aimed at alleviating the suffering of several countries from high food prices, poverty, illiteracy and the spread of diseases.

Mr. President,

UAE places great importance on the role played by the United Nations system and other international organizations in strengthening multilateral cooperation for addressing the existing international challenges. We would like to seize the opportunity to express our pride that the international community has selected Masdar City in Abu Dhabi, as a seat for the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). Masdar city will be an ideal city free from carbon and waste and depends completely on renewable energy. This choice marks a new phase of cooperation and balanced partnership between the north and the south and the developing and developed countries, under the umbrella of this Agency. Hence, we renew

our commitment and readiness to cooperate, particularly in extending the financial and technical resources required for the success of this important Agency. This Agency will be responsible for developing and disseminating the applications and sources of renewable energy. It will also assist countries, particularly developing and the poorest countries, in reducing their dependence on hydrocarbons.

The establishment of the IRENA constitutes a crucial asset. It is an important step forward for the international community in its quest to achieve sustainable development. It will help find suitable solutions for climate change, reduce harmful emissions, maintain the safety and security of our planet and disseminate the applications of renewable energy within an effective international framework of cooperation.

Hosting the headquarters of the IRENA in Abu Dhabi is a proof of our entry into the post-oil era and affirms our readiness to shoulder our international responsibilities and help the world to face challenges related to diversifying energy sources. It also emphasizes our keen interest to utilize our petroleum wealth in securing additional sources of energy.

On the other hand, we wish to stress here that the UAE's interest to develop a program for the peaceful use of nuclear energy stems from its desire to meet its growing needs of energy in the future. We are confident that this program will provide an opportunity for making a positive change in the international arena.

The UAE hopes that developing a peaceful nuclear energy model which complies with the highest standards of transparency in operating the nuclear facilities and fulfills the highest requirements of nuclear safety and non-proliferation, in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency and other responsible and experienced states, will chart a new course for a large group of countries for the safe use of nuclear energy, with international support. The UAE's commitment not to enrich uranium and reprocess fuels locally is among the most salient features of this model. This is a model supported by enhanced international transparency and cooperation mechanisms.

This model for developing peaceful use of nuclear energy is also in line with the firm policy of the UAE. The policy supports the principles of the non-proliferation treaty and reflects the UAE's position, which calls for

making the Middle East and the Arabian Gulf a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons.

In this context, we welcome resolution 1887(2009) issued by the Security Council in its recent summit on Non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament and reiterate the UAE's rejection of existence of any weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We also emphasize the UAE's position which calls for the implementation of the UN resolutions, which demand Israel to dismantle its military nuclear facilities, accede unconditionally to the non-proliferation treaty in tandem with other countries of the region and subject its nuclear facilities to the safeguards of the IAEA.

In this context, we also urge the Islamic Republic of Iran to continue its cooperation with IAEA and the international community in order to allay fears and doubts raised on the nature and the purposes of its nuclear program. We also call upon the respective parties to continue their political and diplomatic approach away from any escalations or emotions so that a peaceful agreement that ensures the security and stability of the countries of the region and their peoples can be reached.

Mr. President,

The goal of achieving security and stability in the Gulf region is a vital priority to the UAE's balanced foreign policy. This policy draws its principles from the UN charter and the provisions of international law, particularly those calling for peaceful co-existence, promotion of confidence-building measures, good neighborliness and mutual respect, non-intervention in the internal affairs of states and the peaceful settlement of existing differences. Hence, the UAE renews its disappointment at the continued occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the three UAE islands: Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa since 1971. The UAE demands the return of these islands under its full sovereignty, including their regional waters, airspace, continental shelf and their exclusive economic zone, as integral parts of the UAE. The UAE also affirms that all military and administrative measures taken by the Iranian Government in these islands are null and void. The UAE also affirms that these measures do not have any legal effect regardless of how long the occupation may last. In this context, we call upon the international community to urge Iran to respond to the peaceful and sincere initiatives of the UAE. These initiatives were supported and adopted by the Gulf Cooperation Council as well as the

League of Arab States. They call for a just settlement of this issue, either through direct and serious negotiations between the two countries or by referring the issue to the International Court of Justice in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter and the provisions of international law.

We hope that the Iranian Government will respond positively and fairly to this sensitive and important issue. This is in order to strengthen neighborly relations, enhance cooperation and promote common interests between our two countries. This would achieve security, stability and prosperity in the region as a whole.

With regards to Iraq, we note, with satisfaction, the gradual withdrawal of foreign troops from its territory and the extension of the authority of its Government over all its territory. In this context, we reaffirm our long-standing support to the people and the Government of Iraq. In particular, we support their efforts to expedite the rebuilding of their security, legislative and economic institutions. We also support the accomplishment of national reconciliation which constitutes the real guarantee of the success of a comprehensive and totally inclusive political process in Iraq that would include all sects and components of the Iraqi people, without discrimination or exception. We wish also to express our deep concern at the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in Iraq and we strongly condemn the recent bombings which have taken place in this brotherly country as acts of terror. In this context, we call for the respect of the territorial integrity of Iraq, its sovereignty and independence and non-intervention in its internal affairs. We also call for safeguarding the Arab and Islamic identity of Iraq and stand against all attempts aimed at dismembering the Iraqi state.

Mr. President,

The UAE expresses its disappointment at the peace process in the Middle East, which has deteriorated due to the continued hostile attitude of the Israeli Government in the Palestinian and Arab territories. This has included the suffocating blockade imposed on the Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza. It also included its continuous challenge of the resolutions of international legality and annexation of more Palestinian and Arab territories. Israel has also continued building further settlements, constructing the separation wall, conducting excavation works under Al Aqsa Mosque, and confiscating buildings and properties belonging to the

Palestinians, particularly in occupied Jerusalem. This is all done with a view to changing their historical and cultural identity and eradicating their Arab and Islamic character, in flagrant violation of the principles of international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. The UAE noted with satisfaction the positive positions expressed by the American President Barak Obama in this hall few days ago. We believe that his address contains solid foundations for negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israeli Government and we hope that Mr. Obama will continue following up this important dossier.

We also welcome the conservative positions stated by the European Union, members of the Quartet and the international community regarding the Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories. However, we believe that these positions are not adequate. Further pressure is needed in order to compel Israel to cease construction of settlements, reverse their aggressive policies against the Palestinian and Arab people in the occupied territories and resume serious negotiations with the Palestinian Authority. Negotiations should be based on the resolutions of international legitimacy and principles of the road map, with a view to ensuring the fulfillment of the international community to the commitments and promises undertaken for the establishment of an independent and viable Palestinian state, living alongside Israel in peace and security. We also wish to emphasize that the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East requires Israel to withdraw fully from all occupied Arab territories in Palestine and from the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967. It also requires Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories in southern Lebanon based on the principle of land for peace, and in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative and its requirements.

The enjoyment of freedom, independence, economic prosperity and civil peace by the Palestinian people cannot be achieved until the prolonged Israeli occupation is completely ended, the separation wall is dismantled, the settlements are removed from the occupied territories, the inalienable legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are restored and the Palestinian Authority is enabled to possess all the attributes and components of an independent state.

We, in the UAE, stand by and support the Palestinian National Authority and the Palestinian people. In this context, we commend H.E.

President Mahmoud Abbas for his tireless efforts to restore the rights of his people, establish a Palestinian state and achieve development and peace there.

We also support the sincere efforts currently undertaken by the Arab Republic of Egypt to reconcile among the Palestinian factions with a view to forming a Palestinian national unity Government. This Government would be capable of realizing the aspirations of the Palestinian people.

In the same context, we look forward to seeing a real beginning to the end of the conflict in Darfur. This in order to achieve national reconciliation, security, stability and bring peace to all parts Sudan.

As for Somalia, which has suffered for decades from disintegration, fighting and statelessness, the UAE looks forward to intensifying the joint regional and international efforts aimed at saving Somalia from its ordeal and supporting development in that country. The UAE further supports all serious efforts made towards enabling the Somali legitimate Government and bringing peace and stability to its territories, and confirms its full support to all international and regional efforts made in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1851, which calls for countering the increasing acts of maritime piracy in international watercourses in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea which are perpetrated by irresponsible elements.

Mr. President,

The UAE affirms the importance of supporting the stability of Pakistan. This provides a strategic depth to the security of the Arabian Gulf region and is an essential element for preserving the security and stability of Pakistan and its vicinity, particularly Afghanistan. In this context, we wish to reiterate the UAE's concern over the stability, development and prosperity in Pakistan. For that purpose, the UAE participates actively and effectively in bilateral and multilateral strategic partnerships, particularly in the Group of Friends of Pakistan.

Regarding to Afghanistan, the UAE plays a positive role in the international efforts aimed at supporting the recovery of Afghanistan and achieving security and stability. It does this by extending humanitarian and development assistance to its people and Government. The total assistance

provided by the UAE to Afghanistan has amounted to some \$ 550 million during the period from 2002 to 2008.

On the other hand, the UAE emphasizes the importance of achieving accord, building confidence and strengthening cooperation with its neighboring countries of Afghanistan, particularly between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

The UAE places special importance on the African countries and their regional groupings. It strengthens its cooperation and trade with these countries by entering into bilateral and multilateral partnerships in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals. It especially focuses on the goals aimed at fighting poverty and ensuring Africa's receipt of a fair and equitable share of global prosperity.

In the meantime, the UAE reiterates its policies of the last four decades regarding Energy, and affirms the need to ensure the vitality and flow of its energy supplies, which serves as lifeline to international economy and industry, without restrictions and political or non political impediments.

On the other hand, the UAE has consistently followed its international policies, guided by the principles and purposes of the UN, particularly with regard to the settlement of international disputes through peaceful means and non-intervention in the internal affairs of states. In this context, we affirm our continued commitment to the One-China principle.

Mr. President,

Our support and effective participation in the meetings of the Alliance of Civilizations, which were initiated by the Governments of Turkey and Spain, reflect our openness to others through positive interaction. It also emphasizes our keen interest to strengthen shared human values and promote understanding, peaceful co-existence, tolerance, mutual interest and joint action on common issues among all the peoples and civilizations of the world.

A thoughtful dialogue among the followers of great religions, philosophies and other various cultures is necessary and possible. This is in

order to facilitate the investment of our common human bonds for achieving peace and positive civilized coexistence, enhancing our mutual supportiveness of values of justice and human rights, combating corruption, oppression, terrorism and extremism, and rectifying the distorted stereotypes of others, including Islamophobia, which resulted from mutual misunderstanding.

Promoting a meaningful and committed dialogue among cultures and religions is a successful and effective means to counter the culture of hatred and racism among peoples and consolidate international security and peace.

On the other hand, the UAE, as an active member of the international community, reiterates its commitment to respect the principles of human rights as well as the provisions of relevant international conventions. The comprehensive periodic report on the UAE was adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva last December.

The steady growth of the UAE economy over the past years has provided employment opportunities for millions in different sectors of the national economy. This has attracted large numbers of foreign labor who remained in the UAE throughout the period of their contracts. This migrant labor has contributed effectively to the development projects and played a distinctive role in supporting the economies of countries exporting labor through the remittances transferred to these countries. My Government attaches great importance to the conditions of migrant labor and the protection of their full rights in accordance with the UAE's constitution, national legislations, and international labor standards. My Government has recently adopted a set of policies and measures aimed at enhancing labor protection in many aspects including wages, housing and reducing the impact of the international economic crisis. In this context, the UAE took the initiative to intensify regional cooperation among exporting and importing labor countries in Asia with the so-called **Abu Dhabi Dialogue**, which aims at promoting the protection of labor in all stages of contractual work. The UAE also participates actively in the "**International Forum on Migration and Development**" and supports the activities and research work of this forum. This was initiated by the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development held on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in the autumn of 2006.

Women and children occupy an important rank among the priorities of the UAE Government. This is especially with regard to education, health, human development and knowledge development. The empowerment of women and care and protection of children are among the major success stories of our national development project, where women today have achieved significant successes in the legislative, executive and political fields in the UAE as well as the private sector and in the areas of culture, creativity and sustainable development of the UAE.

The UAE has effectively participated in regional and international partnerships which aimed at building a more peaceful, stable and just world and combating all forms of violence, extremism, crime, violation of human rights and human trafficking. This participation was in the framework of an equal partnership which is based on mutual respect, and contributes to ensuring peace, stability and sustainability of development.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, we hope that our deliberations on the agenda items of this session will lead to positive results. We hope that awareness is raised on the critical issues and our joint efforts are strengthened to create a world based on the principles of the rule of law, tolerance, prosperity and progress.

Thank you Mr. President.