



Permanent Mission of Germany  
to the United Nations

## **Statement**

**by the Permanent Representative of Germany,  
H.E. Ambassador Thomas Matussek,**

**before the 64<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
of the United Nations**

**New York**

**28 September 2009**

Mr President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Congratulations, Mr President, on your election as Chairman of this 64<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly. I wish you all the best and much success!

At the same time, I'd like to thank the outgoing President of the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the General Assembly for his work!

In these tumultuous times, marked by manifold crises, we are more in need than ever of a global organization that all members make use of and support. We need the United Nations.

The comprehensive, universal system of the United Nations forms the heart of the global system of crisis prevention and mitigation. Now more than ever, Germany pledges its active and extensive support to the world organization.

This last year taught us bitter lessons and today it appears more clearly than ever: We must secure the sustainability of the economic recovery.

This applies not only to the financial sector, but in particular to the most vulnerable in the world: the poorest of the poor in the developing countries as well as to our environment and the world climate.

The consultations on a Charter for Sustainable Economic Activity point in the right direction. The United Nations should be actively involved in this process.

We must turn the crisis into an opportunity for development and a "green recovery".

The aftermath of the financial crisis jeopardizes the progress on the path toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Therefore we must do our utmost to avoid any setbacks in this regard.

The donor states have to continue their efforts for development, all the more so in times of crisis. Germany has continually increased its ODA contributions over the past years.

In 2008, my country was the second-largest donor of official development assistance. In the future, too, we will make every effort to fulfil our ODA commitments.

We have massively increased the resources of the global financial institutions in order to ensure that the states affected by the crisis receive quick and effective help.

We will also significantly increase our contributions to the multilateral development banks.

All of this underscores one thing: Germany, as one of the world's largest economies, stands by its global responsibility.

But developing countries must also live up to their responsibilities. Responsible governance, respect for human rights, environmental protection, the fight against epidemics, the strengthening of the rights of women – these are the challenges that each country must meet on their own responsibility.

Next year, in this hall, we will take stock of the MDGs ten years after the World Summit. As we do so, the people of the world will be watching closely.

We must therefore take stock honestly, and we must not let up in our joint efforts.

We can only provide future generations around the world with a sustainable development perspective if we get climate change under control.

Climate change is the pre-eminent challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It threatens our well-being, our security and our economic development. It will lead to uncontrollable risks and dramatic damage if we do not take resolute action – not in some distant future, but right now.

I can assure you: Germany will continue to be a leader in climate protection.

But let me be clear: we will only be successful if we act together. We need an inclusive process in which those countries directly affected by climate change, such as the small island states, can also play a part. The United Nations is the only reliable framework for this.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his very timely initiative to convene a UN summit addressing this key issue last week.

This largest-ever gathering of world leaders on climate change was a strong demonstration of political will and leadership! We have to keep this momentum in order to "seal the deal" in Copenhagen!

We still have much work ahead of us. Now is the moment to act in common cause. History may not offer us a better chance for a fair, effective and ambitious climate deal in Copenhagen by the end of this year.

Disarmament and arms control can help create better conditions for global cooperation and increase security and stability. We warmly welcome the new dynamic in the area of nuclear disarmament. We welcome the fact that the Security Council also dealt with the topic of non-proliferation and disarmament at the highest level on 24 September.

The call for a nuclear weapons free world enjoys our and widespread support. We must seize this opportunity for progress in all areas of disarmament. Germany has

underlined that substrategic nuclear weapons must also be incorporated in the continuing process of disarmament. Our clear commitment to ridding the world of all nuclear weapons is the best way to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime.

We need a new international consensus at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the start of FMCT negotiations in Geneva and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In order to avoid a conflict of objectives between non-proliferation and peaceful uses, Germany supports multilateral solutions to nuclear fuel supply and has put forward its own proposal for this issue.

The international community must not relent in its commitment to ban all weapons of mass destruction. A model in this respect is the chemical weapons convention which outlaws a whole category of weapons of mass destruction. Its implementing organisation needs strong and dynamic leadership. Germany has always felt a particular commitment to the chemical weapons convention and stands ready to accept greater responsibility in this organisation.

We view the ongoing nuclear programme in Iran with great concern. The belated admittance by Iran concerning the construction of a second enrichment plant underlines that our concerns are more than justified. Even before this latest event, the report by IAEA Director-General El Baradei underlined the urgency of the matter. Unfortunately, the Iranian government still refuses to cooperate fully with the IAEA and to remove serious doubts concerning the peaceful character of its nuclear programme. We urge Iran to grant access to a verification team of the IAEA to the newly disclosed site without delay. We sincerely hope that Iran will use the opportunity of the upcoming talks between Iran and the E3 plus 3 to demonstrate its willingness for honest and speedy negotiations. If Iran's leaders continue to stall, the international community will have no other choice but to take additional measures to underline the seriousness of our common concern.

Iran looks back on a long and great history. It is one of the origins of civilization. It can become an anchor of stability in its region, a respected member of the international community.

But this involves, in addition to a diplomatic resolution of questions regarding its nuclear programme, a responsible foreign policy towards its neighbours. The key to this is the recognition of Israel's right to exist.

Since the escalation of violence in the Gaza Strip at the beginning of the year, we have seen some encouraging signs of a return to the peace process. The resumption of negotiations with the two-state solution as their goal is still possible.

Germany strongly supports President Obama's intensive commitment and regional approach. Together with the partners of the European Union, we are prepared to support efforts towards peace through concrete contributions. What we now need, however, are courageous gestures of goodwill on all sides to create the conditions for serious talks.

The successful holding of elections in June was an important milestone toward the continuing stabilization of Lebanon. What is now important is that a new government soon be formed.

The successful UNIFIL mission remains a crucial contribution to securing the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel and thus to the stabilization of the region. By again assuming command of the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force on 1 September, we have further strengthened our commitment to UNIFIL.

For Afghanistan, 2009 is a pivotal year. The presidential elections, the first elections in decades that were free and organized by the Afghans themselves, determined who will control the fate of the country in the coming five years. They were an impressive sign of the resolve of the people in Afghanistan to take part in the political process.

Against the backdrop of the difficult security situation, the further build-up of Afghan security forces gains an even greater importance.

We will therefore continue to increase the number of German police instructors in Afghanistan. We will support the further build-up of the European Police Mission. And we will help to advance the training of the Afghan Army within the framework of ISAF.

Despite all criticism, there are also encouraging accomplishments, especially in the field of economic growth and in the reconstruction of the country's infrastructure.

The basic prerequisites for Afghanistan's sustainable development are good governance, the resolute fight against corruption and an improvement in state services. These are essential if the population is to once again nurture hope for the future.

As one of the biggest troop-contributing nations and one of the main bilateral donors, Germany will continue to play an instrumental role in the reconstruction of the country.

Following the presidential elections, we are entering into a new phase of cooperation between the international community and Afghanistan.

For this reason, Germany, together with the United Kingdom and France, has taken the initiative for an international conference which will set out concrete, realistic and measurable goals for the further political and economic development of Afghanistan. To this end, the Afghanistan Compact, which will expire in 2010, should be further developed.

In 2010, we will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the independence of no fewer than 17 African states. A fitting moment to also look to the future.

Despite the global economic crisis, the overall outlook for Africa and its people is positive. We must succeed in utilizing the continent's enormous potential in terms of people, creativity and resources. It remains our challenge to support the development of this potential while at the same time respecting African ownership.

African ownership should by no means be equated with a withdrawal from our neighbouring continent. On the contrary, it means that we cultivate relations with the states of Africa in the spirit of partnership, a partnership in which each side introduces its ideas, and in which we work together to master the challenges we face, whether locally or globally.

One major common challenge remains the containment of violence and the protection of people in conflict areas.

Just two weeks ago, a cowardly bomb attack on African Union peace-keeping troops in Somalia claimed the lives of many innocent people. At the Horn of Africa, we must break the vicious circle that exists between weak institutions, instability and the willingness to engage in conflict. We are ready to help.

We are engaged, for example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo – in particular in the eastern part of that country – or in the creation of humane living conditions in Zimbabwe, and we are helping to consolidate the stable and democratic conditions in West Africa.

Germany will continue its extensive engagement in Africa, be it in the areas of development cooperation, peace and security, business and technology, in the environmental and energy sector or in educational and scientific cooperation. This also applies to the cooperation with the AU, which has in recent years been increasingly expanded.

UN peace-keeping missions are a central pillar of the international security architecture. Today, UN peace-keeping, with over 116,000 soldiers, police officers and civilian personnel in 15 missions, faces major challenges.

We know that today there are higher expectations placed on peace-keeping. In the eyes of the international community, protecting the civilian population is often the main duty of peace-keeping missions.

But the missions also have to lay the foundation, sometimes in the midst of or immediately following the acute conflict, to prepare the path for peace and stability.

The current missions fulfil these two central tasks to very differing degrees. The reform of UN peace-keeping is an urgent issue. Germany is ready to actively contribute to this reform.

Furthermore, it is absolutely essential that the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations be further intensified. The European Union has just shown that with its peace-keeping missions in Africa – the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chad to name just two examples – it is a reliable partner of the United Nations when it comes to crisis management.

We are facing a multitude of global challenges. Today, no country is strong enough to tackle these challenges on its own. We need a universal forum for joint global action. That is why we need a strong United Nations that is capable of taking effective action.

A long chain of high-level meetings – from the 2005 High Level Event to the Secretary-General's Summit on Climate Change last week – has emphasized how urgent it is to adapt the United Nations to the challenges of today's world.

For the threats have become global. Our responses, however, are still not always global. And this is true for the United Nations as well.

To be sure: the United Nations and its tens of thousands of employees here and around the world, including in Bonn, Germany, are doing outstanding work.

The peace-keeping soldier who protects against displacements, the aid worker in the disaster area risking her own life to save the lives of others – they all deserve our thanks. They make the world a better place.

Reforms must start with simple questions: Does a particular body effectively fulfil its tasks? Does its composition reflect the world of today?

Where this is not the case, "reform" must have a clear objective – to make the United Nations more effective, more credible and more assertive.

However, we must not limit reforms to the United Nations. If we want to deal effectively with the current crisis and effectively prevent future crises, we must also reform the international financial institutions.

Isolated reforms of individual institutions will not get us anywhere. The reform of the financial institutions and of the United Nations must intermesh as a larger reform of "global governance". A reform which, more than six decades after the founding of today's world order, is long overdue.

Germany, incidentally, is advocating at high level the improved representation of newly industrialized and developing countries as part of the reform of the international

financial institutions. This is our understanding of "global governance": fair participation for everybody.

In 2000 and 2005, the Heads of State and Government called for the reform of the Security Council. They did so out of the realization that we can only meet the threats of today if the Security Council reflects the world of today.

One thing is clear – if the Security Council does not reform itself, there is a risk that other bodies will attempt to take its place. Such a rivalry would be detrimental to us all. Let us therefore attempt, in this 64<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, to bring about concrete results.

Germany has been and remains willing to take responsibility. This includes taking on a permanent seat on a reformed Security Council.

We underline this readiness to take responsibility also with our candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the period 2011-2012.

Through our work in the Security Council, we want to contribute to the success of the United Nations. Just as we are already contributing to worldwide UN missions, to development funds, humanitarian aid or UNEP.

Now and in the future, we will work toward finding common interests, overcoming divisions and strengthening a global partnership of responsibility.

I thank you for your attention.