



# TUNISIA

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

**Statement by**

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**Mr. President,**

At the outset, I would like to extend to You and, through You, to the brotherly Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahirya our sincere congratulations upon your election as President of the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly. We are confident that your wide experience and qualities will help enrich the works of the present session and achieve the objectives to which we all aspire.

I would also like to express our appreciation to Mr. Miguel Descoto Brockman for his excellent manner with which he conducted the works of the previous session.

I also wish to express our warmest thanks and appreciation to Mr. Ban Ki Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, for his tireless efforts aimed at promoting the role of the United Nations and achieving the noble objectives for which it was created, to serve peace, security and prosperity in the world.

**Mr. President,**

Our world is witnessing today deep and rapid changes that have conferred new dimensions upon international relations which have altered the balances and the equations that long governed these relations. Such changes generated major challenges at various levels, requiring all parties to shoulder their responsibilities with vision and wisdom and to redouble their efforts in order to conceive approaches that would lay the basis for a safer, more stable and more developed world and for more balanced, equitable and solidarity based international relations.

The important scientific and technological evolution we are witnessing today has certainly brought about considerable progress in a large number of fields, reduced distances and improved the quality of life. However, such developments did not put an end to hotspots of tension nor to the various conflicts which are still prevailing in some parts of the world causing more tragedies and nurturing conflicts, extremist trends and violence. Besides, those developments did not end the suffering of many populations in the world, who are still subject to hunger, poverty, indebtedness and underdevelopment, nor did they prevent the occurrence of financial and economic crises that hit most of the world countries and impacted the pace of their economic growth and their development schemes and which disrupted the world economic and financial systems while the digital and the technological gap and other forms of disparities among countries and populations have not been reduced.

These are some of the disturbing paradoxes of the present world situation which contradict the values and principles we have striven to implement and upon which the United Nations was founded.

We believe that the international community needs to further increase its efforts and focus them on achieving sustainable development and implementing the noble universal values, that the world needs so badly, such as cooperation, tolerance, and solidarity, which in our view remain the ideal way to strengthen nations' ability to positively interact with international changes and face the challenges of the present world situation, especially that these challenges and difficulties, in light of the globalization reality, seem to have a global dimension and hence require a collective response based on responsibility sharing among all nations.

The United Nations, which constitutes the ideal framework for taking up such a collective responsibility, is also in dire need, more than ever, to adapt to the changing situation at the international level in order to keep up with developments and fulfill its mandate in the most appropriate way.

Indeed, the present structure of the United Nations, which is the outcome of the conditions of its creation more than half a century ago, does no longer reflect the reality of the new world situation.

This reality calls upon us to speed up the pace of the UN reform process, as outlined several years ago, so as to reflect the requirements of the world situation and allow the Organization to carry on its mission.

We hope that the international community will manage to introduce the necessary reforms to the UN bodies, particularly as regards enlarging the Security Council, to add more transparency and efficiency to its works, and revitalizing the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, bearing in mind the necessity to achieve the widest possible consensus on these pending issues.

**Mr. President,**

In spite of its complex and intermingled character, the world situation will only strengthen our attachment to the United Nations and to its founding principles as the ideal framework for coordinating and uniting our efforts to address the present issues and challenges, to reform the system of international relations by implementing the noble principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, find efficient solutions to pending issues, mitigate the impact of economic and social crisis and promote solidarity based frameworks of partnership and cooperation, in accordance with a more comprehensive approach based on the close correlation between peace, security and development.

Further rapprochement and solidarity among nations of the world remain, according to us, one of the most noble aims of the UN.

As it should be the pillar of the new system of international relations, it is necessary today, more than ever before, to further disseminate the culture of tolerance, dialogue, acceptance of the other and respect for cultural differences and religious symbols, to build up constructive relations among states and peoples, based on moderation and the rejection of extremism, violence and fanaticism of any kind.

Tunisia put forward, many years ago, several initiatives to give effect to this noble objective, including the adoption of the Carthage Charter on Tolerance in 1995, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's call in favour of education of tolerance, Tunisia's call for dialogue among civilisations in 2001, and the creation at the University level of the Ben Ali Chair for dialogue among civilisations and religions. The last contribution to date was the adoption of the Kairouan Declaration by the "International Conference on the Dialogue of Civilisations and Cultural Diversity", held in June 2009, to celebrate "Kairouan, Capital of Islamic Culture for the Year 2009", organised with the cooperation of the Islamic Education, Science and Culture Organization (ISESCO) and the International Organisation of Francophony.

Tunisia also plays an active part in the activities of the Alliance of Civilisations, jointly launched by Turkey and Spain with the objective of deepening mutual respect and understanding among peoples.

**Mr. President,**

Globalization, with its numerous problems and major challenges, urges us to take care of our Youth and constantly listen to their concerns in order to preserve them from exclusion and marginalization, protect them from the dangers of seclusion and extremism as well as from carelessness and estrangement while instilling in them the culture of tolerance and moderation.

Therefore, based on the special status that we reserved our Youth as they are our real wealth, support of the present and foundation of the future, we, in Tunisia, have insisted on spreading the spirit of responsibility within this group and encouraging them to participate in a concrete manner in all aspects of public life and take part in establishing the country's future policies and objectives.

Based on this approach and on the experience of Tunisia in dealing with the Youth and their aspirations, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali called for the proclamation of 2010 "International Year of the Youth" and the organization, during the same year, under the auspices of the United Nations and in cooperation with the relevant international organizations, a World Youth Conference to be attended by young people from all parts of the world and to be concluded with the issuing of an International Pact, uniting the world Youth around common universal values.

We strongly hope that this initiative will contribute to deepening the awareness about the position that the Youth shall enjoy within our societies so that they become an active stakeholder in the success of our development processes as well as about the role that the Youth should play in promoting dialogue, enhancing comprehension and mutual respect between peoples on the basis of universal values and noble human principles upon which there is no disagreement between cultures and civilizations, such as tolerance, moderation, and respect of the other, rejection of all forms of violence, extremism and segregation, the culture of citizenship, solidarity, peace and dialogue, stimulation of the spirit of initiative, volunteering and environment protection.

This initiative has already enjoyed the support of Arab, African, and Islamic regional organizations as well as that of the Non Aligned Movement. We, therefore, look forward to your support for the adoption of a resolution by the General Assembly during its current session.

**Mr. President,**

In spite of the numerous national and international efforts that have been made for many years in order to deal with and contain terrorism and extremism, they still constitute a threat to peace and security and brotherhood in the world.

We have, on numerous occasions, called for the necessity to adopt a comprehensive approach in facing these dangers as they spare nobody, one that takes into consideration their root causes as well as just and sustainable solutions to ongoing world problems and working towards the decrease of poverty, exclusion, marginalization in the world and confronting extremist movements that favor fanaticism, seclusion and hatred.

Being one of the first countries to warn against the dangers of this phenomenon since the nineties, Tunisia renews its call to convene an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations in order to elaborate a Code of Conduct to fight terrorism by which all sides will be bound.

**Mr. President,**

Faithful to its identity and keen to ensure full integration in its environment, Tunisia is constantly working with determination to enhance the relations of cooperation with its partners in the various regions where it belongs.

With the firm belief that the Arab Maghreb Union is an indispensable strategic choice for the interests of the Maghreb peoples and a way to enhance the status of its members both regionally and internationally, in a world where blocs and groupings are proliferating, Tunisia has spared no effort, together with the other Maghreb countries, to complete the process of building up this Union, boost common Maghreb action, and work to overcome the temporary difficulties that prevent its materialization, the aim being for the Union to occupy the

position it deserves on the international scene and increase the capacity of its member States to overcome present and future challenges.

Tunisia also continues to work to boost common Arab action and revitalize its mechanisms, besides developing cooperation and partnership relations with sister Arab countries in various fields, with the view to achieving the long expected Arab economic integration.

**Mr. President,**

Many international problems, particularly in the Middle East, remain unresolved and constitute a source of deep concern for the international community, given their consequences on security and stability in the region and the world.

We wish to reaffirm in this forum Tunisia's constant and principled support for the just Palestinian cause and the brotherly Palestinian people in their fight to recover their legitimate rights and set up their independent state on their land.

We have noted with satisfaction the positive stances of the American administration on the Middle East issue, the elements of a just and comprehensive settlement of the conflict and the two-state solution, as well as the subsequent initiatives, efforts, and contacts to resume the peace talks.

Today we renew our call to the international community, especially the sponsors of the peace process, to intensify their efforts so as to urge Israel to end, without conditions, its policy of settlements, thus enabling talks between the Palestinian and Israeli sides to resume, in conformity with international resolutions, all peace process decisions, and the Arab peace initiative.

Achieving peace, ensuring safety, and bringing back stability to the Middle East depend on lifting the blockade, dismantling the roadblocks, and abandoning the humiliating measures and other provocative steps taken against the Palestinians, as well as on the recovery by the Palestinian People of its legitimate national rights and the establishment of its independent State and on the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Golan and from the remaining Lebanese lands.

We also express our solidarity with our brotherly Iraqi people, hoping to see it overcome the difficulties it still faces, achieve national reconciliation and consolidate security and stability so that Iraqis can devote themselves to the reconstruction of their country in a spirit of unity and cohesion.

**Mr. President,**

In Africa, the hotspots of tension and conflicts in many regions, some of which still persist, have devastated the continent, causing the dilapidation of its energies and potential, putting its development process in jeopardy, slowing down its growth, and negatively affecting its societies.

Faced with this situation, and given the comprehensive nature of the approach to security and peace in the world, the international community and the UN organs, first and foremost the Security Council, are called upon to support the efforts of the African Union and its Member States and stand beside the African peoples to help them regain security and stability and overcome the effects of conflicts and wars.

We are confident that the African continent, which was able to overcome the colonisation era and segregation and which made significant progress towards integration and complementarity, should be able today to improve its situation and surmount its problems, relying first on its own capacities and then on the cooperation of the international community to achieve economic and social development, build up balanced societies and increase preventive measures likely to thwart the return of conflict and favour dialogue and peaceful ways in settling differences.

Based on the structural relationship between peace, security, and development, and on the world's pressing need to reinvigorate the values of cooperation and solidarity, Tunisia proposed an initiative that was adopted by the UNGA in December 2002 to set up a World Solidarity Fund aimed at fighting against poverty and laying down the foundations of a solidarity-based development among nations. Today we renew our call to operationalize this Fund, thus enabling it to provide assistance to developing countries in general, particularly in Africa.

I would like to take this opportunity to renew Tunisia's appreciation for the efforts made by our Brother, the Leader Mouammar Kaddafi, Leader of the Libyan Revolution, President of the African Union, aimed at enhancing security and peace and promoting Africa's development process so that our Continent is granted the status that it deserves and is able to participate in action and through initiatives in international affairs, which will confer more justice and balance on international relations and ensure an equitable geographic representation within the United Nations, for the benefit of a world where security, peace and stronger values of cooperation, consensus, and solidarity shall prevail.

In this regard, we call for enhancing efforts to ensure a total commitment to what was agreed upon during the high-level meeting on climate change, especially with regard to making the fifteenth conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009 a success, this being a major opportunity that the international community should seize to achieve important results, similarly to what was agreed upon with regard to the final draft of the convention to replace the Kyoto Protocol.

**Mr. President,**

Tunisia spared neither effort nor energy during the last two decades to climb up to the rank of developed countries, using a prospective and future-oriented vision the foundations of which were set up by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and which covered all fields -political, economic, social, development- and that was materialized through the deep reforms that led to the reinforcement of democracy and the culture of Human Rights in minds and practice as well as the expansion of general freedoms and the participation of all components of the Tunisian society in the country's political course within the framework of the State of law and institutions.

Tunisia is committed to move forward with its development and modernization process in order to adapt to the world changes, participate in building a world that enjoys peace and stability, and establish more balanced and solidarity-based international relations.

**Mr. President,**

To conclude, I would like to reiterate that our countries' success in securing development and promoting relations of cooperation among them is closely linked to an international environment that is characterized by security, stability, and justice. While Tunisia renews its commitment to the values of peace and to the principles of international legality in finding just and sustainable solutions to the ongoing world issues, it insists on the necessity to reinforce the values of moderation, tolerance and mutual respect in the relations between nations and peoples as well as on building bridges of communication and dialogue between civilizations, cultures, and religions.

Thank you for your attention.