



**PERMANENT MISSION OF TURKEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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ADDRESS

BY

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PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
TO THE  
GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 64<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE  
UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to address you once again on the occasion of the General Debate of the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate Mr. Abdusselam Treki on his election as President of the 64<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

I wish to express my appreciation and thanks to Mr. Brockman as well, for his able and prudent conduct of the Presidency of the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the General Assembly.

Taking this opportunity, I also thank all the member states for the high degree of trust and approval placed in my country, which was elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council by a wide margin of support last year.

Mr. President,

The global problems of our age necessitate global scale solutions.

From wars to economic crises, from hunger and poverty to terrorism, from energy security to climate change, the problems our world faces today are extremely challenging. However, none of them is insurmountable.

For the resolution of these problems, we need a fair and inclusive global order which is based on trust and which regards diversity as a source of richness.

It is possible to make the transition from a conception of the world based on risk and threat perceptions to one based on trust and solidarity. This has become a necessity for all of us. But to be able to do that we need a new kind of leadership.

We can indeed make the 21<sup>st</sup> century an era which is ruled by peace instead of wars; trust instead of fear; justice instead of injustice; tranquility instead of terror and violence; and prosperity instead of hunger and poverty. It is our common responsibility and historic duty to participate in the construction of such a world, regardless of our language, religion and nationality differences.

Threats like terrorism and the proliferation of nuclear weapons have become sources of concern on a global scale.

Problems such as hunger and poverty, the increase in the frequency of pandemics, worries about food and energy security, and growing xenophobia and radicalism remain grave challenges.

Global warming and the financial crisis are fundamental questions that require substantial solutions.

Against such a backdrop, the relevance and indispensability of the United Nations have become even more evident.

In order to establish a fair and participatory global order, we must work together to enhance the efficiency of the United Nations.

We certainly do not despair. We maintain our hope that the achievement of global peace and stability is within our grasp. We therefore wish to see the United Nations serve as the voice and spokesman of the global public conscience.

We believe that a more representative, democratic, transparent, just and effective United Nations will be able to make a greater contribution to global peace and stability.

The United Nations must become a much more effective institution on matters such as climate change, sustainable development, the struggle against poverty, gender equality and the protection of human rights and dignity. We fully support the reform efforts in this direction.

However, it is without a doubt that the reform of the UN system will be incomplete if not accompanied by the Security Council reform.

I would like to underscore once again that Turkey is in favor of the enlargement of the Security Council in the non-permanent category.

Another important aspect of the UN reforms that I wish to underline is the need to improve the UN peace keeping system.

In this context, we want the views and expectations of particularly the UN troop contributing countries on issues like early and effective coordination, capacity building and enhanced cooperation with regional organizations to be taken into full account.

Mr. President,

Turkey continues to be a force for peace and stability in the volatile region in which it is located.

Especially in the course of the past 7 years, we have exerted every effort to settle all our differences with our neighbors. Thanks to this approach which we call "zero problem with neighbors" Turkey has made significant progress in resolving outstanding issues with its neighbors and greatly improved its bilateral relations.

The problems in our region have global implications. Therefore, our constructive and peaceful regional policies serve not only our own neighborhood but also global peace.

However, even that we don't consider sufficient. We aim to move from a relationship of passive good-neighborliness to one of active friendship and cooperation. The positive impact of this approach on regional and world peace is well appreciated by all our friends.

A concrete example of this situation is our ongoing dialogue with Greece. Another case in point is our quest to normalize our relations with Armenia, which has gained fresh momentum lately, and begun to bear fruit.

It is high time that lasting solutions based on the territorial integrity of regional countries are found to the other disputes in the Caucasus as well.

In this regard, we hope that our regional partners will share Turkey's vision for region-wide peace, security and stability.

We believe that the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform, which we launched in the aftermath of the crisis in August 2008, can make a substantial contribution to the efforts in that direction.

Another issue of close interest to us and the world is Iraq's territorial integrity, political unity and internal peace.

We attach great importance to the continuation of the political dialogue process encompassing all the groups in Iraq and the establishment of national unity. A clear manifestation of this is the Neighboring Countries Process regarding Iraq which was initiated by Turkey.

In this connection, I also wish to emphasize the significance of the Strategic Dialogue Mechanism set up between Turkey and Iraq, which is important both in terms of the fight against terrorism, as well as all other aspects of bilateral relations. We are fully committed to maintaining and further developing this process.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is another regional issue to which Turkey is sensitive.

In our view, the resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict based on the vision of two states that will exist side by side in peace and security is an indispensable element of regional and global peace.

The achievement of Palestinian national unity will expedite the establishment of the independent Palestinian state.

Turkey has always stood by the Palestinian people and will continue to do so.

I wish to draw your attention to the following facts:

The aggression against the Gaza carried out at the end of 2008 quickly turned into a human tragedy and resulted in the deaths of nearly 1400 people, most of whom are women and children. Over 5.000 people were injured. The infrastructure of Gaza was completely destroyed.

Even the UN buildings in Gaza have not escaped this destruction. Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon has personally witnessed the devastation and voiced his reaction.

The 575-page UN report on Gaza which was released on 15 September 2009 clearly confirms this fact.

It has been eight months since the declaration of the ceasefires that ended the hostilities in Gaza and the adoption of the Security Council resolution 1860.

Similarly, six months have elapsed since the Sharm al Sheikh Conference where the international community pledged billions of dollars for the reconstruction of Gaza.

However, I regret that the human tragedy in Gaza still goes on.

The wounds of the people of Gaza have not been sealed. The promises made for Gaza have not been kept. As was the case at the time of the aggression, Gaza has been once again left to its own devices in the aftermath of the heavy destruction it suffered.

Currently, even the importation of construction materials to Gaza is not permitted, and the suffering of the Gaza people continues.

We demand that these obstacles are immediately lifted and normalcy restored to Gaza for the sake of peace and security of both Israel and the Palestinians.

The Palestinian question cannot be resolved solely by satisfying the demands of one party. The security of the Palestinians is as important as the security of Israel. The Palestinian people's quest for freedom and peace is as legitimate as Israel's quest for stability.

The settlement of the Palestinian question which is one of the greatest obstacles to regional and global peace will only be possible when everyone is treated fairly and equitably.

Turkey has on every possible occasion stressed that it is not possible to turn a blind eye to the appalling conditions in Gaza, and we will continue to do so.

It is our common humanitarian and moral responsibility to ensure that the tragedy unfolding in Gaza is brought to an end, and an atmosphere of lasting peace is created in the region.

It is extremely important that the international community remain engaged in this matter and inject a new vigor to efforts to resolve the problem.

We call on all parties concerned not to remain indifferent to this question and not to condone further sufferings.

We believe that resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian talks that have been disrupted by the Gaza conflict is of utmost importance and hope that the Peace Process will be revitalized as quickly as possible.

So far, we have made every possible effort to contribute to the Peace Process. The indirect negotiations between Syria and Israel, which we hosted in Turkey in 2008, are a case in point. Depending on the mutual desire of both parties, we are ready to resume our active role in this process.

We have always said that Syria is a very important country in our region and in a position to play a key role in the search for regional peace, security and stability. Similarly, Lebanon too is of critical importance for regional stability. Turkey expended intensive efforts to ensure that a comprehensive political compromise prevails in Lebanon. We will continue to support strongly Lebanon's stability.

We believe that the dispute over our neighbor Iran's nuclear program, which has long preoccupied the international community, should be resolved through dialogue.

Turkey defends the right of all countries to benefit from peaceful use of nuclear energy. On the other hand, we also call upon all countries to act responsibly, bearing in mind the serious consequences of the proliferation of nuclear weapons for the whole world. We supported the Security Council resolution 1874 on North Korea's nuclear test last May, in this spirit.

We also follow closely the situation in Afghanistan and the developments in Pakistan. We support the struggle which the peoples of Afghanistan and Pakistan, with whom we enjoy historical and brotherly ties, have been waging against extremism. We sustain our infrastructure investments in order to help the two countries achieve the prosperity they deserve.

The Friends of Democratic Pakistan's Ministerial Meeting which we convened in Istanbul at the end of August is an indication of the importance we attach to Pakistan's stability and prosperity.

At this point, I would like to declare that in addition to becoming the Lead Country on Afghanistan in the Security Council in 2010, we shall assume the Chairmanship of the Committee on Counter-Terrorism.

Our strong support for efforts on achieving security and stability in Afghanistan and combating terrorism shall continue unabated during the course of our performance of these duties on the Council.

Another region which we follow closely is the Balkans. We believe the integration of the regional countries with Euro-Atlantic institutions is important and that this perspective should be maintained.

Mr. President,

Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus support the efforts for finding a comprehensive solution on the Island.

The basis upon which such a solution should be built is right here, under the roof of the United Nations.

If all the parties to the present negotiations were to act constructively, it would be possible to reach a comprehensive solution by the end of 2009. As was the case in 2004, we believe that the UN Secretary-General should play a role in bridging the differences which the parties themselves cannot resolve.

It should be our common objective to submit the solution to be reached to a referendum in the spring of 2010 at the latest.

However, at this juncture, I would like to stress the following point as well: If a solution cannot be found due to Greek Cypriot intransigence, as was the case in 2004, the normalization of the status of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus will become a necessity which can no longer be delayed.

It is therefore essential to realize that the negotiations cannot be sustained ad infinitum, that the present window of opportunity cannot remain open forever and that efforts must be deployed for the success of the process.

I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize once again that a comprehensive solution to be achieved on the basis of established UN parameters, which will secure the founding of a new Partnership in Cyprus, will enjoy the open support of Turkey as a guarantor power.

A fair and lasting solution in Cyprus will make a major contribution to the transformation of the Eastern Mediterranean into a zone of peace, stability and cooperation. I call upon everyone to do their utmost to help achieve this goal.



In the meantime, the Turkish Cypriot side is still subjected to unfair measures of isolation, despite the fact that in 2004 it accepted all the sacrifices that the Annan Plan entailed. It is not fair to expect the Turkish side to pay the price for a lack of solution. The lifting of such restrictions on Turkish Cypriots will not only remove an unjust practice but also accelerate the process of resolution.

Mr. President,

Turkey continues to actively participate in peace-keeping operations around the world under the umbrella of the UN, NATO, EU and the OSCE.

We also lend strong support to the least developed and developing countries in their struggle to resolve developmental problems.

On the other hand, as a party to the Kyoto Protocol, Turkey is ready to live up to its responsibilities with respect to this vital issue which concerns the future of our world. We support the determined efforts being made by the Secretary-General in the process of devising a new climate change regime.

Before concluding, I wish to draw your attention to another very important issue which poses a threat to our world.

We should not forget that each culture and civilization flourishes through the inspiration provided by the successes of other cultures and civilizations.

As a matter of fact, our common values today as well as our science, law and art have been influenced not only by old Greek and Roman civilizations but also ancient Eastern civilizations.

From Al Harezmi, the father of algebra, to Farabi who laid the foundations of music, from Ibn Sina who ushered in a new era in medicine to Sinan the architect who produced the finest engineering examples of his time, many Turkish and Islamic scholars, men of learning and artists made significant contributions to the progress of mankind.

It is therefore essential to regard and understand diverse cultures not as the "other" but as individual elements of mankind's cultural inheritance and to cultivate this spirit in new generations.

This is the philosophy which underlies the Alliance of Civilizations which has become a United Nations initiative and strengthened its institutional structure under the co-sponsorship of Turkey and Spain.

I have no doubt that the Alliance will make significant contributions to shaping a global civilization based on universal values through activities in the spheres of democracy, rule of law, good governance, human rights, gender equality, youth and media.

As I conclude my remarks, I would like to express my hope that the 64<sup>th</sup> General Assembly will serve the best interests of all humanity.

Thank you.