STATEMENT

BY

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Mr. President,

I congratulate our new president, Mr. Joseph Deiss on his election and thank Dr. Treki, our outgoing president, for his strong leadership in support of United Nations reform.

I would also like to express our great sympathy to the Government and people of Pakistan and fellow United Nations' members whose people have suffered the terrible effects of natural disasters over the past year.

I also thank the Secretary-General and his staff for co-ordinating international relief efforts.

Mr. President,

We have had a long week of formal meetings and sideline discussions and there is still much more to be done before we all go home.

So, at this time, I would like to be brief and offer a statement of support for what our people regard as the most important aspect of United Nations work. By this, I mean the work of our United Nations agencies, their experts, their advisers and, above all their volunteers in the field.

Mr. President,

I think the theme for this year’s debate underlines the importance of their work. It asks us to recognise the central role of the United Nations in “global governance”. I have no difficulty in doing this.

Achieving security, progress and development is, of course, our own individual responsibility. As last week's high level discussions on the Millennium Development Goals made extremely clear, however, many of the challenges we face are beyond single nations and even single regions.

They are “international” in the full sense of the word. So we need help, experience and expertise, and this is what the United Nations agencies offer us.

As we all know, their support goes on all year, every year.

In my own country, it is taking place right now, through the UNDP, the UN Environmental Programme, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the WHO.

We are most grateful for their help. They work in vital areas of national development, education, health, agriculture, communications, and infrastructure. They meet people directly, listen and discuss. They teach, train and encourage. They work closely with our local authorities and, sometimes, they do even more than that.

We learned this during last year’s H1N1 health crisis.
For a small nation like ours, this was very serious indeed. It could have almost closed us down and could have certainly caused widespread panic. But it didn’t.

This was very largely due to one fact: our people knew that we were not alone.

They had the guidelines given to us by the World Health Organisation and this gave them the confidence they needed at that extremely worrying time.

Mr. President,

Our theme this year invites us to “re-affirm” and, as I have said, I am very happy to do this without reservation.

I “re-affirm” our respect and deep appreciation for the work of all the United Nations agencies. We are delighted to be working with them and we warmly congratulate the Secretary-General on their work.

In the words of our theme, the United Nations does indeed play a “central role”. Without its agencies, the concept of “global governance” can only be at best, an idea and, for most of the time, just words. It is the agencies that help us turn the idea into real substance and change the words into actions that our people understand, respect and welcome.

In fact, Mr. President, they are much more than “agencies”. For countries like ours, they help become far more than small developing nations.

They make us part of a United Nations that is truly “united”.

Thank you.