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الدائمة لدى الأمم المتحدة - نيويورك



Statement by
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Of
The Syrian Arab Republic

At
The General Debate

Of the
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Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly,

Allow me to congratulate you personally and congratulate your country, Switzerland on your election as president of the current session of the General Assembly. Your experience and competence qualify you to ably discharge your responsibilities. I wish you success in your endeavors. I thank your predecessor, Mr. Ali al-Tureiki and extend to him and to his fraternal country our appreciation for his skilful stewardship of the work of the Assembly during the last session. I wish him success in fulfilling the major tasks entrusted to him.

The Middle East region has been rife with tension for decades. It survived major events and numerous wars. The policies, interests and trends which unfolded on its soil converged at times but clashed at others. Due to its geographic location, the Middle East influences its neighboring countries in Asia, Europe and Africa and is influenced by them. Syria, which lies at the heart of the Middle East, experienced these tensions, policies, events and outcomes and reacted to them.

This fact – which spelled both positive and negative consequences for the Syrian Arab Republic defined its perspective in addressing external issues, particularly the nature of its international relations. Safeguarding Syrian and Arab interests is our priority. Therefore our door remains open for an in-depth and meaningful dialogue which aims at reconciling differences and reaching common grounds on the basis of which progress can be made. That was our response when Syria endured attempts to isolate and blockade it, a response we reaffirm today as Syria discharges its role as a major player in matters related to the security and stability of the region. We believe that civilized international relations must be built on openness and dialogue as opposed to insularity, isolation, confrontation and aggression. This is our approach which we hope will prevail in a world driven by multiple interests and visions, overwhelmed by problems and complications yet at the same time sustained by hopes and noble dreams.

Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The world has solemnly declared that it is determined to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and stressed that peace is an urgent prerequisite for the maintenance of security and stability in the region.

In Israel, there is much talk about peace yet the drums of war continue to sound. Land appropriation for settlement building goes on unabated. Peace negotiations, we are told, are underway on the basis of the two-state solution but relentless settlement activities are about to make this two-state solution dead letter that stands no chance of survival. Israel is feverishly pursuing its Judaization plans for Jerusalem which it has long sought to depopulate of its Palestinian inhabitants. Israeli actions threaten the safety of Jerusalem's holy sites. Through settlement activities, actions and declarations relevant to Jerusalem Israel pursues a fait accompli policy on the basis of which it imposes its will regardless of whether negotiations continue or stall.

Peace can be genuine only if there is a genuine will to make peace. This is the litmus test. Political maneuvers during negotiations under the umbrella of "the desire for peace" strain and exacerbate the situation and may make it more volatile.

Syria wants a just and comprehensive peace achieved through the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242, 338 and the Arab Peace Initiative. Our solemn position has been known for years. We have the will to make peace and we are the masters of our decision, which is unwavering. The Occupied Syrian Golan is not negotiable nor is it a bargaining chip. Recognition of the fact that it must be returned fully is the basis on which peace making arrangements should be made.

Syria is ready to resume peace negotiations from the point where they stopped through the Turkish mediator if it finds in Israel a partner committed to the terms of reference of peace making, and if that partner has the political will to achieve peace.

Mr. President,

We note with satisfaction the partiality of the report of the UN Human Rights Council Fact Finding Mission which looked into the Israeli attack on the Freedom Flotilla that was heading to Gaza on an exclusively humanitarian mission. We look forward to the conclusions to be drawn from the report now that the necessary legal grounds and supporting evidence have been established.

Mr. President,

Syria is an Arab fraternal neighbor of Iraq. To us Iraq shall remain a subject of and a cause for concern particularly when the situation deteriorates. We embrace any improvement in conditions there with a major sense of relief. The restoration of Iraq's full sovereignty and independence, the preservation of its Arab and Islamic identity, the unity of its people and its territorial integrity are of utmost priority for, and the basis of our approach towards Iraq and its future. Undoubtedly, national unity remains the cornerstone of a secure, prosperous and strong Iraq.

We have called for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Iraq. In this context, the gradual withdrawal process of American forces from Iraq constitutes in our view a positive first step in the direction of Iraq's assumption of its responsibility towards its own affairs and the restoration of its full sovereignty over its territories. We hope that Iraq will ultimately develop strong military and security capabilities to safeguard its security and safety as an independent and sovereign state.

It should be reiterated that Iraqi security is contingent upon its national unity based primarily on its Arab-Islamic identity, and on the participation of all the stripes of the Iraqi people in building their country's present and future.

Syria is willing to cooperate with Iraq in every aspect that will serve Iraq's interests, and the common interests of our two fraternal countries.

Mr. President,

My country has been advocating the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East since 2003, a demand we included in a resolution we tabled before the Security Council at the time. We continue to stress that Israel must comply with international decisions calling on it to adhere to the Non Proliferation Treaty and to submit its nuclear installations to the IAEA safeguards regime. Israeli accession to the Treaty is of extreme significance for the security and stability of the region. We often wonder why they talk about the universality of the NPT but hasten to make strenuous efforts to shelter Israel from the Agency's oversight. They are encouraging Israel to continue developing its nuclear military program which is a cause of concern to the people of the Middle East. Furthermore, this policy of double standards runs counter to the non proliferation prerogatives not only in the Middle East region but in the world at large.

We reaffirm that all states have the right to acquire nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, as guaranteed by the NPT. We also call for the peaceful resolution of all disputes relevant to this aspect through dialogue.

Mr. President

Syria follows the developments in the Sudan because we are dedicated to Sudan's unity, sovereignty, security and stability. We are grateful to State of Qatar, the League of Arab States and the African Union for their efforts.

We also highly appreciate and support the African Union's efforts in settling disputes in the Sudan and other conflict zones on the African continent, and in promoting the African role in the international system

We also strongly reiterate our call for lifting the embargo that has been imposed on Cuba for decades.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The world has been inflicted by numerous natural disasters resulting from climate change and Global Warming. We all know that these disasters are but a prelude to more severe and probably wider scale calamities that could well threaten life on this planet. We owe so much to nature yet we exceeded all limits in abusing it. Many countries chose to ignore the warnings of scientists and the ominous signals from nature. We must rise to the challenge, and assume our historic responsibility so as to make up for past imbalances and shortcomings.

We look forward to an expression of international solidarity in Cancun based on scientific evidence and on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. It is our hope that the Cancun outcome would take into account the priorities of sustainable development in order to arrive at a comprehensive and legally binding post-2012 framework agreement. We believe that it is extremely important to address the shortcomings of Copenhagen and to renew commitment to the Bali Plan of Action and the premises of the Kyoto Protocol.

The dire situation in Pakistan which is a typical symptom of climate change is yet another example of the devastating disasters that we must expect unless we work seriously and tirelessly together to address this grave situation. The people and government of my country Syria wholeheartedly sympathize with Pakistan and other disaster stricken countries. I stress the need increase the assistance to Pakistan, both in cash and in kind to mitigate the tragic and wide spread damage and prevent any further exacerbation of the situation.

We aspire to a more just and secure world, and look forward to furthering the role of the United Nations and guaranteeing respect for international law. We must not forget though that our planet earth is home to the world we are aspiring to build. This home is besieged by an ominous climate change that spells tragic consequences for humanity. This year was only a prelude to what is yet to come. We sincerely hope that the Cancun Conference will be the herald of a direly needed rescue effort.

I thank you for your attention.