



# **CZECH REPUBLIC**

**Statement by**

**H.E. Mr. Václav KLAUS**

**President of the Czech Republic**

**at the General Debate of the 65<sup>th</sup> Session  
of the General Assembly of the United Nations**

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**Check against delivery**

Mr. Chairman,

Let me start by congratulating you on your election to the very responsible post of the highest representative of the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I have the privilege to represent the Czech Republic, a country in the very heart of Europe, a country which has been actively involved in the United Nations activities from the very beginning and which will continue to do so. We are actively involved in a number of UN organizations and the Czech soldiers and experts have been participating in UN peace-keeping missions for many decades. It is in our interest that this organization remains a respected high-level forum, contributing to prosperity, stability and peaceful solutions to the conflicts in the world.

It has been many times repeated here in the last few days that today's world is much different from the world in 1945, when this organization was founded by 51 states. It is 192 now. It is not only a quantitative change. It is much more. My country is deeply convinced that the structure of the United Nations needs to be different too. Especially **the Security Council needs to be reformed to reflect the geo-political, economic and demographic reality of the 21<sup>st</sup> century**. It is frustrating that the discussions about such reform have been going on for the past 16 years without results. It is time to come with concrete results and my country is ready to support them.

Changes of that kind are necessary, but – on the other hand – something must continue without changes. **I don't think that the UN needs to search for a new mission.** The goals of the United Nations should remain those defined in the original UN Charter:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations;
- to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems.

**The United Nations should not divert from these principles.** It should not search for alternative or substitute projects to those which enhance peace, freedom and democracy. It should remain **an intergovernmental platform**, based on the plurality of views of its member states, and on our mutual respect towards their sometimes differing positions.

Let me briefly touch upon two issues which form part of the current UN agenda.

The first issue is **the worldwide economic crisis and the methods to overcome it.** I am afraid we are moving in a wrong direction. The anti-crisis measures that have been proposed and already partly implemented follow from the assumption that the crisis was a failure of markets and that the right way out is more regulation of markets. This is a mistaken assumption. It is not possible to prevent any future crisis by implementing substantial, markets damaging macroeconomic and regulatory government interventions as it is the case now. It is only possible to destroy the markets and together with them the chances for economic growth and prosperity in both developed and developing countries.

The solution to this or any other crisis does not lie in rising protectionism and it is positive that most governments have behaved quite rationally in this respect. **The solution doesn't lie in "more bureaucracy" either, in creating new governmental and supranational agencies, or in aiming at global governance of the world economy.** On the contrary, this is the time for international organizations, including the United Nations, to reduce their expenditures, make their administrations thinner and leave the solutions to the governments of the member states which are directly accountable to the citizens of their countries.

Developing countries should not be prevented from economic growth. They need access to foreign markets and they need free trade. It was at this forum last year, when I emphasized that we must pay attention to the costs and benefits of our decisions. The developing countries must not be forced into agreements about ever more ambitious targets in the fight against climate change, moreover, in a situation when the developed countries themselves are far from meeting those targets.

The UN should not have an all-encompassing agenda. It should not turn away from political topics towards "scientific" ones. The UN is not here to determine what science is but to engage its member states in a rational, reasoned debate about political issues. The most

harmful political debate we have been witnessing in the last couple of years is about climate and global warming.

We should not resign on elementary values and principles most of us share and this brings me to the second issue I wish to mention here today – **nuclear non-proliferation**. In April this year, my country was hosting an important event during which the President of Russia and the President of the United States signed a treaty on further reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms. We see this treaty as an important step forward and as a visible signal in the efforts to make our complicated world safer. Let's hope that it will have a further continuation in the foreseeable future.

We do not dispute the right of any country to use atomic energy for peaceful purposes but it must do so in a responsible way. It is not possible for some countries to ignore the agreed and respected international standards, to threaten stability in their regions and to increase the risks of proliferation.

The United Nations is a unique forum, at which both small and big countries are represented. They are countries with different political, economic and social systems, with different neighbors, with different historical experience and geopolitical position, and more importantly, with different levels of income, wealth and development. This is precisely what makes the UN unique and irreplaceable.

Instead of increasingly becoming a source of funds for various, sometimes very dubious non-governmental organizations which – without any accountability and control – seek to profit from the UN activities, the UN should strive to be an efficient body where states and their people are represented. The UN's role is not to push for global governance and to play the central role in it. The UN exists primarily to enhance friendly relations among its members and to look for solutions to problems which can't be confined to national boundaries.

I wish you, Mr. Chairman, every success in your office, and I would like to assure you that the Czech Republic will continue to be an active member of the United Nations.