



# LUXEMBOURG

Déclaration de Monsieur Jean ASSELBORN,  
Vice-Premier Ministre, Ministre des Affaires étrangères

devant la 65<sup>ème</sup> session ordinaire de l'Assemblée générale  
des Nations Unies

New York, le 24 septembre 2010


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Declaration by Mr. Jean ASSELBORN,  
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs

65<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the General Assembly  
of the United Nations

New York, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010

*Seul le discours prononcé fait foi*



Candidat au Conseil de sécurité  
**2013-2014**  
Candidate for the Security Council

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The values on which our Organisation was founded 65 years ago are still valid when facing today's global challenges.

Whether we discuss ways to fight poverty, protect the environment and conserve biodiversity, build peace in conflict areas, help the populations affected by natural disasters, promote human rights, the rule of law and democracy in the world, progress towards disarmament and non-proliferation or the fight against terrorism, today more than ever, we need to work together.

Mr. President, you have quite rightly organised this general debate on the subject of "Reaffirming the central role of the UN in global governance."

As a founding member of the United Nations, Luxembourg fully endorses the Secretary-General's assessment that only the UN has the necessary scope, knowledge and legitimacy to develop and implement effective policies in order to address global challenges, which require urgent and collective responses.

We cannot, however, content ourselves with this simple statement of belief. One needs to draw the consequences and assume responsibilities.

These responsibilities are both individual and collective ones, especially for members of the international community and our universal Organisation.

Mr. President,

At the High Level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, which was held earlier this week, we reiterated our collective determination to do everything to free humankind from famine, illiteracy and epidemics and eventually eradicate global inequalities: inequalities between and within continents, regions and countries, men and women.

Luxembourg welcomes this renewed commitment to fight poverty in its manifold dimensions. The establishment of a true partnership for development is based upon shared responsibilities for both donor and recipient countries. If we rely on enhanced actions from developing countries when it comes to good governance and the rule of law, capacity-building and development ownership, developed countries must, on the other hand, fulfil their commitments in terms of aid quality and quantity; this constitutes a necessary corollary for such a partnership, particularly with regard to Africa.

I am proud to say that Luxembourg is among the countries which keep their promises and strive to be reliable international partners, even in times of crisis. Since 2000, Luxembourg's official development assistance (ODA) has reached the threshold of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI). In 2009, our ODA surpassed 1% of our GNI. Our Government is committed to maintaining this effort, both in terms of percentage and

volume of gross national income; these efforts are necessarily linked to a steadily growing aid quality.

Mr. President,

The duty to prevent, contain and resolve conflicts is a central aim of our Organisation. The Charter compels us to unite our forces in order to maintain international peace and security.

With more than 120.000 men and women deployed, peacekeeping operations have reached an unprecedented scale in recent years.

If the stabilising role of UN troops is undeniable, the changing nature of conflicts and the increasing complexity of mandates have also revealed the limits of the system, structures and basic tools of our Organisation.

The mass rapes and sexual assaults which took place in North Kivu this summer and the inability of the UN Mission for Stabilisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo to protect civilians are a brutal reminder of the difficulties surrounding peacekeeping in conflict areas in the absence of adequate resources and mandates.

These atrocities are urging us to continue the debate on the future of peacekeeping operations and to overcome our differences and divisions on this particular issue.

They also stress once again the importance of consistent UN commitment to eradicate the utilisation of sexual violence as a weapon in wartimes. I thus welcome the appointment by the Secretary General of Margot Wallström as Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. As we celebrate this year the 10th anniversary of resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, such heinous acts, such gross violations of human rights cannot be tolerated any longer. Impunity must end.

While the primary responsibility for the safety of its citizens, the fight against impunity and the establishment of the rule of law lies within the Congolese Government, the international community must do everything to support the latter in its efforts so that the people responsible for these horrendous crimes are found, tried and punished. The fight against impunity must also lead us to be more attentive to the report on violations of human rights between 1993 and 2003, the publication of which the High Commissioner for Human Rights has announced for 1 October 2010.

As I have already said at the Review Conference of the Rome Statute, in Kampala in May, the fight against impunity for serious crimes should not be an elusive goal any longer, but become a tangible and concrete reality, the success of which depends on our cooperation all together.

Mr. President,

Year after Year, it is in this very forum that we express our hopes to see peace come true in the Middle East. We are calling for a solution based on the coexistence of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. We urge the parties to

assume their responsibilities and create through their actions the framework for a lasting settlement of the conflict.

To date, these calls have been mostly unsuccessful.

The resumption of direct talks between Israelis and Palestinians on 2 September 2010, however, makes one cherish the hope that we will finally reach a definite settlement, which would end the occupation which began in 1967, and give birth to an independent, democratic, viable and adjoining Palestinian state, coexisting in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours.

It does, however, require one not be distracted by the enemies of peace, by those who seek to sabotage peace talks. It will be important for both parties to show determination and courage, calm and restraint, and to act only according to international law. Hence the importance of ending all settlement activities. They are illegal, contrary to international law and constitute an obstacle to peace.

Why? If the material fact of building on another person's land is to be condemned, it is the symbol of domination and humiliation that cannot be accepted. As a European I am heartened to see that the European Union persists in its call for a prolongation of the moratorium beyond 26 September 2010. President Obama's statement very clearly takes the same position.

Meanwhile, it will be of paramount importance to find a lasting solution for the situation in Gaza and to revive its economy. The blockade remains on the ground. I hope that UNWRA's calls will be heard at last. I welcome in this respect the launching by the UN Secretary-General of an international investigation into last May's incident surrounding the aid flotilla which was en route to Gaza. A full, honest, impartial, balanced and transparent investigation consistent with international standards is of great significance. It also touches upon the credibility of our Organisation.

Mr. President,

In Sudan, the implementation of the CPA enters its final phase with the referendum on self-determination of southern Sudan and Abyei.

After more than two decades of fighting, the prospect of a definite settlement is taking shape at last. The path remains fraught with difficulties and it is our collective responsibility to help Sudan stir through this critical period and carry out a process which will eventually bring lasting peace to its people.

We must ensure that the elections are conducted in a transparent and peaceful manner regardless of the outcome.

Increased efforts are needed as well to support the current initiatives of the African Union and the United Nations towards a political solution involving all parties in Darfur to address the root causes of the conflict and ensure protection and promotion of human rights, justice and reconciliation. The continuing violence in Darfur threatens the stability of the whole of Sudan and the region.

A comprehensive approach is also needed in Somalia, a country that has for too long been synonymous with civil war and a horrid conflict. Only a comprehensive approach will put an end to the terrorist threat created by armed groups in Somalia, in the sub-region and for the entire international community, as well as allow one to eradicate piracy in the long term and re-establish the rule of law in the country.

My country seeks to play its part in the global efforts to resolve the crisis in Somalia. Luxembourg actively participates in Operation Atalanta to deter, prevent and suppress acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast and in the military mission to help train security forces of the interim Federal Government, two operations launched by the European Union in support of UN Security Council decisions.

Together with our European and African partners, we intend to continue our support for the Djibouti peace process and the search for a lasting political solution.

Mr. President,

Much could still be said about the challenges facing our organisation in terms of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, the need for greater coherence between activities relating to politics, security, development, human rights and the rule of law, the need to engage more intensively in the fight against linked threats such as organised crime, terrorism, drug trafficking and human trafficking, or even the importance of providing a predictable and consistent financial support to post-conflict peace consolidation, to align the support of international partners, at global, regional, national and local levels with national peacebuilding strategies and thus create synergies across the UN system.

But allow me for a moment to address another issue which should not be overlooked when discussing ways to guarantee and strengthen peace, security and stability at the international level, namely, disarmament and non-proliferation.

The success of the 8th Conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, held here in New York in May, brought us closer to our common goal of a safer world for all, a world free from nuclear weapons. It will now be important to maintain the political momentum and to ensure the full implementation of these decisions, including provisions relating to the holding of a Conference in 2012 on a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East. Progress in this area, I am convinced, will not remain without consequences for other actors and other issues.

In addition, and I had the opportunity to mention it this morning at the ministerial meeting of the Conference on Disarmament convened by the UN Secretary General, we must continue our efforts for both nuclear and conventional disarmament. The constant search for security at the lowest possible level of armaments will be an essential contribution to stability in the world.

I welcome in this respect the coming into force on 1 August 2010 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. Luxembourg, which was among the first countries to sign and ratify

the Convention, has also prohibited the funding of cluster munitions at the national level.

Advances made towards a legally binding instrument under the auspices of the UN in the sector of arms trade are also to be welcomed.

The problems linked to unregulated trade in conventional weapons and the diversion of these weapons into illicit markets have the potential to fuel instability, organised crime and terrorism, thus jeopardising peace, security, economic and social development. Hence the importance of an eventual adoption of a binding instrument in this field.

Together with other partners, my country will organise a symposium on the Arms Trade Treaty in Boston next week, in which all UN member states have been invited to participate. We thus hope to contribute to discussions and reflections on this important issue.

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

If we believe in the relevance of a multilateral approach based on the United Nations, we must give this Organisation the means to be the centre of multilateral action and a real catalyst for change.

We need to push for decisive internal reforms, including the reform of the Security Council.

We are all aware of the need for a Council reform, the need to make it more inclusive and more representative of today's realities, to make it more efficient and more transparent. Ensuring an adequate place for small states, which now represent the vast majority of Member States in this Organisation, is paramount in this regard.

We must revise the instruments at our disposal, be it peacekeeping operations, which I have mentioned previously, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council or the necessary integration of human rights in all aspects of UN action.

The Peacebuilding Commission represents a key addition to the operational capacity of the international community in the vast field of peace. Luxembourg fully supports the philosophy behind this Commission and is actively involved in the Guinea-Bissau formation programme. The Commission has begun to prove its usefulness, but we should consider how we can make its results more tangible at the country level, to allow other countries to benefit from its achievements, and face emerging challenges. Our goals must meet the expectations of post-conflict societies and peoples. In this regard I welcome the recent decision to include Liberia in the agenda of the Commission.

We also need to overcome the fragmentation which has gradually developed since the creation of our Organisation and enhance the system-wide coherence.

An important step in this direction has been made this year with the creation of UN Women, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. I would like to warmly welcome the appointment of Michelle Bachelet as head of UN Women. She will undoubtedly demonstrate a dynamic and an unwavering commitment to serve women and girls worldwide. She will be able to rely on the full support of Luxembourg, which has for many years been pursuing an integrated gender approach and an active promotion of gender equality, including in the field of development cooperation.

Mr. President,

As you have rightly pointed out during your inauguration on 11 June, our primary mission is to work together to find constructive solutions for the dignity, safety and well-being of us all.

My country is ready to continue to play its part at the national level, but also as a member of the European Union.

The willingness of Luxembourg to assume its national responsibilities can be seen in the concrete examples which I have just mentioned. It is also expressed in our candidacy for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the period 2013-2014.

The commitment of Luxembourg is also a European one. By strengthening its capabilities and the synergy of its instruments following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU is now, more than ever, ready to be an active, effective and supportive actor for the United Nations, and this in all areas of the Organisation. The EU wants to be such an active and supportive partner. Hence the importance attached to a resolution regulating the effective participation of the European Union in the work of our Organisation.

It is only together, assembled in the United Nations, that we can help build a better future for us all.

Thank you