



ANDORRA

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Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for such a well-deserved reelection, and Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser for his appointment as President of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

It is with pride, a sense of responsibility and a will for cooperation and proactivity that I address this hall in the name of the Principality of Andorra and the Government which I have the honor to represent. The United Nations, and the system of international law which emanates from it, places all States on an equal footing. And this is especially important for States such as Andorra, small in terms of territorial dimension, but large in values and in history.

Recent years have been marked by a profound crisis of multiple aspects: economic, social, environmental and political too... but very especially a crisis of values. Now that among all of us we have to set the basis for recovery, we need to be quite clear about the values and principles on which we wish to continue constructing the world.

We do not need to go much further than the founding spirit of this Assembly, an institution where all – large and small, the wealthier and the less endowed – address one another on equal terms to promote peace, liberty and justice. In the same way as the United Nations arose after a world war which turned the world as it had existed until then upside down, now again we have to be able to set the moral and political bases of a new order of things.

One of the priorities fixed by the United Nations is inclusive and sustainable development. Actually there cannot be sustainability without inclusion. And if this Assembly, which arose from the debris of a devastating war, was able to give a voice to all the peoples of the planet, we have to be capable now of ensuring that no-one is excluded from the future that we forge together.

We must take care that the economic recovery after the recession does not further accentuate the inequalities – understood as a lack of equity – already existing. Thus, as international law ensures the protection of those nations – such as ours – which have no military potential, so also economic growth must be especially attentive to the more vulnerable to prevent the consequences of the recession from falling systematically on them.

30 years ago, in 1981, the United Nations held the First Conference on Underdeveloped Countries; last spring the Fourth Conference was held showing the difficulty to achieve significant changes to improve the weakness and vulnerability of those States. Further, we observe with concern how, with the background of the global recession, some of the more developed countries often adopt protectionist attitudes. From the conviction that a freer world is a more just world, we also have to state that a more open and less protectionist world leads to a more equitable balance and improvements for the more disadvantaged.

Andorra, with its small scale, its secular stability and its seclusion among mountains, is also dealing with a far-reaching process of opening its economy. We also have planned the construction of a model of inclusive growth, which leaves no-one out; a model which cannot be constructed by turning one's back to the international community or by being isolated from the world.

I was talking about economic opening, but the opening to the world cannot be strictly economic. And it is crystal clear that recovery from the crisis and a new phase of growth will not come about solely as a result of economic measures. The search for an inclusive and sustainable balance must necessarily involve combating factors which are not strictly economic but which do accentuate inequalities between countries.

In this sense, we must note the work done at the High Level Meeting on AIDS held last June and the commitment made by the participant States to intensify their efforts in the fight against this pandemic. In spite of the advances achieved in recent years, HIV is a symbol of up to what point it is necessary for progress to reach everyone equally: while in the more developed countries AIDS has become a chronic illness duly treated, in the more disadvantaged areas – especially in sub-Saharan Africa – this illness is still lethal, especially in the communities with fewest resources. Going beyond the increase of resources for research and treatment and greater north-south cooperation, I am convinced that the extension of democracy and of human rights is also a key factor in the fight against a pandemic which overwhelms the poorest, but which also hits peoples submerged in ignorance and oppression.

With all this, the degree of commitments made and the progress achieved by the various States in the fight against HIV should be a reason for satisfaction, since seldom has the international community been capable of articulating a response so rapid and unanimous when faced with a threat on this scale. It would be grand if the same level of awareness and commitment could be achieved in the fight against non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes. These also – although perhaps not so clearly as in the case of AIDS – are diseases which accentuate the inequalities between countries. This has been recognized in the Political

Declaration on Non-Communicable Diseases approved in the High Level Meeting which has been held during these days.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

These contingencies cannot allow us to forget that one of the most serious challenges facing the international community and this Assembly – which is its highest representation – is the fight against climate change.

Up to now humanity was used to overcome recessions and times of crisis, entering a new phase of growth, without thinking of the negative external effects of that growth. Now we do know now that growth is not possible at any price, that development must be sustainable in economic terms, but also and very especially in environmental terms. This is why climate change is a threat as great as or even more powerful than the global recession.

Some developed countries – especially those which live on their natural resources – are seriously threatened by climate change. This can be the case of Andorra too, which bases a good part of its economic welfare on snow and mountain tourism. This is why we will always support any initiative aiming at a greater awareness of the need of fighting climate change, combating it and taking measures to adapt ourselves to what is likely to become a reality.

In this sense we must mention the coming into force in Andorra of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of 31 May last.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have to bear in mind that the main goal of the United Nations is to guarantee peace and security in a framework of liberty and respect for human rights. Just as in the past States emerged to guarantee social peace and individual freedom for their citizens; the United Nations also have their *raison d'être* in the maintenance of peace and security and the sovereign authority of international law.

We talk today of inclusive and sustainable economic growth and of a new and profound awareness of the threat of climate change. We cannot forget that these questions are closely related with the promotion of a safer world. Growth, which leaves behind the more vulnerable groups and excludes underdeveloped countries, added to the effects of climate change, leads to a world less safe and less stable.

This year it is the tenth anniversary of the tragic terrorist attacks of 11 September, here in New York, the United Nations headquarters. And today we witness, as President Obama said last Wednesday, 'a new tower is rising at Ground Zero, it symbolizes New York's renewal, where ten years ago there was an open wound and twisted steel, a broken heart in the center of this city'.

This year we close the first decade of the millennium without having resolved the threat to the security of our world, that is, international terrorism. In spite of the advances achieved in this front, the threat continues. Terrorism arises from hatred and wickedness. But we must be aware that terrorism dwells where there is a lack of economic prospect, there is illiteracy, lack of culture, misery, marginality... where, in short, there is a lack of democracy.

This is why, in the promotion of a safer world, our efforts will always be needed to combat all kinds of discrimination. In this sense I want to mention the Political Declaration against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia which was achieved during this General Assembly. It is now 10 years since the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. And today, for the States represented here, we say that we cannot afford to lower our guard, that in this ever more globalized and complex world, the risk of discrimination is growing.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have already mentioned the need to continue constructing the world on the principles and values which inspire this Assembly. Permit me to remind you now of the spirit and philosophy of the 28th President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, father of the Society of Nations, the precursor of today's United Nations. Wilson taught us that it was of little use to be democrats at home if we were not capable of exporting democracy beyond our frontiers; that a State could not presume to be democratic when it turned its back to countries which still lived under oppression and in which the most essential rights and liberties were not respected.

This is why we have to welcome with a positive attitude what we have named the Arab Spring. We hope these democratizing movements consolidate in the future. In this sense in July we supported the joining of South Sudan to the United Nations. Today we are pleased with this new reality and we warmly welcome this 193rd State member. A more democratic world is a more dynamic world, but also safer, because it is more fair. And most of the insecurities in our world, as I said a moment ago, grow fat on injustice.

Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we must keep encouraging dialogue and mediation. The Palestinian people's aspiration to have a democratic and peaceful State is as legitimate as the Israeli wish to obtain a guarantee for its existence and security. The final aim of a mutual recognition of two States by both peoples, in accordance with 1967 lines with agreed and equivalent exchanges is at stake. A possible intermediate status in a shorter term by becoming an observer State could represent hope for the Palestinian people, provided this status is not used for aims incompatible with the continuity of negotiations and will lead to the above mentioned long term goal. Also Israel has to contribute to this process restraining attitudes that could affect the final status.

Andorra is a country which has lived for 700 years without an army, without taking part in any war and without internal conflicts. The perpetual peace and permanent stability of which, we Andorrans, are so proud is not founded on an autocratic regime controlling strictly its people or a caprice resulting from dissuasion of bigger or more powerful neighbors. Not at all. The ultimate ground for a peace and security maintained for more than seven centuries has been the constant effort to respect individual rights and liberties, the sovereign authority of justice and of equity and the existence of mechanisms of solidarity, as was well demonstrated in the last Universal Periodic Exam, when we affirmed, once more, that human rights continues to be the star which guides us on the road to follow.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our democracy and our centuries-old parliamentarianism are not the fruit of peace and stability, but the reverse: peace, security and stability are the fruits of democracy. Because without democracy no lasting peace or security is possible neither in Andorra or anywhere in the world.

Since our humble contribution to the United Nations, we want to reaffirm commitment as the main value of our political action: commitment understood as a deep belief in peace and equal opportunities, but also as an involvement and taking on individual responsibilities regarding a common project and finally but not the least as a wish of dialogue and understanding. Last Wednesday, President Sarkozy stated in this Assembly: *'Choisissons la voie du compromis, qui n'est pas un renoncement, qui n'est pas un reniement, mais qui permet d'avancer, pas à pas, étape par étape'*. And Andorra is working and will work for such a commitment within this organization.

I thank you for your attention.