



# ESPAÑA

**INTERVENCIÓN DE LA MINISTRA DE ASUNTOS EXTERIORES Y DE COOPERACIÓN**

**EXCMA. SEÑORA DOÑA TRINIDAD JIMÉNEZ GARCÍA-HERRERA**

**ANTE EL PLENARIO DE LA 66ª ASAMBLEA GENERAL  
DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS**

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(Cotejar con intervención definitiva)

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**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION**

**H.E. MS. TRINIDAD JIMÉNEZ GARCÍA-HERRERA**

**AT THE 66<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE PLENARY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**New York, 24 September 2011**

(Unofficial translation, check against delivery)

Mr. President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you for your appointment as chair of this principal organ in which we all strive to achieve the purposes of the United Nations.

I also wish the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban, the greatest possible success in performing his mission of promoting peace and progress around the world with the same effectiveness that he has demonstrated throughout his first mandate.

I would also like to warmly congratulate the representatives of the new State of South Sudan, which has recently joined the family of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

The economic and financial crisis continues to be a cause of serious concern for the entire world; its consequences materialize in the most various fields. The capacity of the international community to take action to address any type of crisis, and to do so in a timely manner, is limited. This situation holds back the fight against poverty and puts at risk the implementation of sustainable development policies which are more needed than ever.

Spain, together with its European Union partners, is taking difficult decisions in order to tackle the crisis. However, beyond the actions taken at the regional or national levels, it is essential to undertake a coordinated global response. In this context, the United Nations system makes an important part of the solution.

Mr. President,

Women's equality is one of the basic human rights, based upon the concept of equality among all human beings. Advancing women's equal access to the labour market, as well as to the political and social grounds, is not only ethically imperative, but an essential measure to overcome the crisis.

Since 1 January of the current year, the United Nations counts on UN Women as an instrument to assist its member States to achieve this goal. Its Executive Director, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, will boost this effort and she can be certain on Spain's full support. We will be at the side of all women who fight for freedom and equality.

Mr. President,

Over the past few months, we have witnessed episodes of rebellion in which the people have fought against the tyranny of rulers who denied basic human rights, as well as the dignity and value of human beings, preventing people from participating in their countries' political life and from making use of their resources and opportunities.

We celebrate the success of the popular movements in Tunisia and Egypt and we join the efforts of the international community to support and strengthen the transition processes in both countries led by their own peoples.

The Libyan people will also be able to enjoy freedom at last. They will be able to live in democracy after decades of dictatorship and months of conflict. We have welcomed the Libyan representatives in this General Assembly with the satisfaction that the United Nations, by implementing its principles, has stayed at the side of the Libyan people.

We have now the obligation to continue to help them in the reconciliation and reconstruction processes. We are ready to do so and we will do it under the guidance of the United Nations, following the pace and addressing the needs that the Libyans themselves will set.

Unfortunately, the international community continues to witness with indignation the brutal repression of civilian demonstrators by the Syrian authorities. I wish to firmly condemn once again these actions and reiterate the need for the international community to take measures to stop repression.

Mr. President,

The Tunisian, Egyptian and Libyan revolutions, the Syrian uprising and the acceleration of the reform processes in Morocco and Jordan are part of a profound transformation of the Arab world, with deep consequences for the region and for the international community as a whole. The legitimate aspiration of the Palestinian people to enjoy freedom cannot be left aside of this wave of change.

The Arab-Israeli conflict has accompanied the United Nations nearly since its foundation. This session may be remembered as the one in which the General Assembly granted Palestine the status of a non member observer State. This decision could be supported by Spain for a number of reasons:

- The international community recognizes that a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict requires the existence of two States, the Israeli and the Palestinian, living side by side in peace and security.
- After more than sixty years of conflict, the international community should send a clear signal to the Palestinians underlining its deep, unambiguous commitment in favour of the creation of the Palestinian State.
- The year in which the “Arab Spring” changed the realities in the Arab world and indeed in the world at large, the just, legitimate and long-standing aspiration of the Palestinians to live in their own State, free from occupation and its accompanying suffering, deserves a clear response from the international community, which cannot be postponed any longer.

This new step could be conceived as a stage towards the legitimate objective of Palestine to become a Member State of the United Nations.

Effective, sustainable peace can only be achieved through negotiations between the parties. Spain believes that the Palestinians could find in this new status a stimulus for the prompt resumption of negotiations. Since such is the shared goal of the parties and the international community, the new status should not be used in a way incompatible with the spirit of negotiations. Israel should also contribute to this spirit by refraining from measures that prejudice the final status.

Spain is coordinating its position with the rest of its European Union partners. Allow me to thank the efforts of the High Representative Catherine Ashton to reactivate the negotiations, in a way acceptable to all European Union Member States.

Spain’s engagement with the Palestinian people and their struggle against occupation is long-standing and known to everyone. Spain has always given political, economic and moral support to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians.

On the other hand, the historical relations between Spain and the Jewish people date back from many centuries ago. Spain’s identity cannot be understood without its Arab and Jewish heritage.

I wish to underline Spain's commitment to the State of Israel as the embodiment of the project to create a homeland for the Jewish people. Since its foundation, Israel has lived through many wars and has suffered from terrorism against its civilian population. For Spain, the security of this young State born out of an ancient people is essential. The best way to preserve it is, precisely, through a peace treaty that, among other things, should agree to the establishment of a Palestinian State along the lines of 1967 with agreed swaps and Jerusalem as a shared capital with Israel. The security of Israel and Palestine will require effective guarantees in the future peace agreement, including a possible international participation, should the parties request it.

The future peace agreement should look into the future, turning its back onto the painful years of the conflict. Therefore, Israel and Palestine have to be certain that claims originating from the conflict will be overcome with their signature of the peace agreement. Also, the solution to be given to the painful drama of the Palestinian refugees shall be just and agreed upon by all parties concerned, allowing the preservation of Israel's current character. The Palestinian State will be, also in this field, a key element for the final resolution of the conflict.

Mr. President,

Some voices have raised concerns about the possibility that the new democracies may be home to political groups brandishing radical or extremist ideologies. Democracy is an open and fair system of political participation which must also be able to defend itself from possible threats.

Fortunately, we can count on instruments that may contribute to the prevention of this type of situations. The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, which promotes intercultural dialogue and cooperation, is a clear example of it. The Mediterranean Strategy which has been developed under the framework of the Alliance may help, through youth programs and raising awareness campaigns, to the diffusion of democratic values and respect for Human Rights, always in coexistence with those of local cultures.

Mr. President,

We have to prevent Al Qaeda's terrorism from being reinforced in the Sahel region due to the release of uncontrolled weapons. The international community has to be united in the fight against this curse that scourges countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, in the same irrational and cruel way in which it struck New York, Bali, Madrid, London, Mumbai, Moscow and many other places over the past decade. The United Nations itself has recently suffered the consequences of a terrible terrorist attack in Abuja which adds to those previously endured in Bagdad and Algiers, among others.

Once again, I extend our condolences to the Secretary-General and express our solidarity with the victims and their families, as well as with the hard-working members of the staff of the United Nations.

The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attack to the Twin Towers in this city of New York took place a few days ago. We have lived a bloody decade since then in spite of the determined fight of the international community against terrorism. I firmly believe in and I wish to reaffirm the need to strengthen international cooperation with a view to preventing and fighting against terrorism.

This is the reason why Spain has joined, since its inception, the initiative of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum which has been launched just a few days ago. We firmly support the United Nations initiatives under the framework of its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as well as the efforts of the Security Council and those of the Secretariat to rationalize the existing structures in order to reach the goals that we have set in this area.

My country is especially sensitive to the victims of terrorism. Unfairly forgotten at times, calling upon them cannot be only a rhetoric tool, but the expression of an effective commitment to grant them recognition, memory, assistance and the support that they deserve. This is the way we have understood this matter in Spain when we have legislated on this issue, providing us with one of the most advanced and efficient models in the world in assisting the victims of terrorism.

Mr. President,

Spain follows very closely the dynamism of a region with strong links with Spain, which is Latin America. The strength of the Latin American economy is essential to overcome the crisis and to create a new international economic governance.

This is why enhancing and consolidating a broad dialogue with Latin America is crucial. This dialogue should include the big issues of the global agenda, such as the design of an ambitious and innovative international financial architecture, climate change, energy, security or migrations.

Latin America has made of its regional integration an engine that has fueled its growth and better understanding. Spain has always wished to accompany this process in the framework of the Iberoamerican Summits.

Mr. President,

Other regions of the world also deserve special attention owing to the dramatic situation undergone by their populations due to drought and other endemic problems. The situation in the Horn of Africa is simply unbearable. We are contributing to the alleviation of the famine in Somalia, in coordination with other donors and with the agencies of the United Nations. However, humanitarian aid, despite being a priority, is only a first step towards development. We still have a long way to go in many places of the world.

For this reason, I would like to reaffirm the commitment of Spain with the Millennium Development Goals. The fight against poverty is a fundamental objective of my country's aid and cooperation for development policy. The challenge of the Millennium Development Goals should encourage us to redouble our efforts to achieve them in the stipulated terms. However, in order to realize these development goals and in order to grant a future for generations to come, we must make the most out of meetings such as the one that will take place in Rio in 2012, aiming at forging a new paradigm that should allow us to combine the development goals with the sustainability of the environment.

Taking advantage of the momentum created by the Cancun Conference in 2010 on the negotiating process on climate change is also important. We will continue to contribute to the process in a constructive manner, together with our partners of the European Union, in the upcoming Durban Conference.

The financial crisis that affects the global economy cannot be an excuse to avoid our commitments. On the contrary, it should encourage us to fulfill them. This is the reason why Spain believes in supporting the development of innovative financing instruments. That is to say, the development of those mechanisms through which we should be able to mobilize mid and long term additional financial resources, in a stable and predictable manner, as well as complementary to official development aid, which should be maintained in any case. Spain currently holds the presidency of the pilot group on innovative financing for development, a group in which we have pinned great hope.

Mr. President,

The support and participation of our country in the activities of the Organization with regards to the maintenance of peace and security in diverse parts of the world is also a demonstration of our commitment to the achievement of the purposes of the United Nations. Close to 1.200 Spaniards actively participate nowadays in UN peacekeeping operations, being especially remarkable our presence in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon; a mission which is essential to the maintenance of stability in the South of the country, being also helpful to the economic development of the area.

I would like to thank the Secretary General for participating in the inauguration of the UN Base in Quart de Poblet, Valencia, thus recognizing the commitment of my country to the United Nations. This Base, which Spain has put at the disposal of the UN, will serve, as the Secretary General has said, and I quote "to facilitate the work of the Organization, to enhance the reliability of its communications and to considerably improve the safety and security of people on the field".

Spain is deeply proud of its participation in the United Nations' operations, as well as of keeping up its firm, active and permanent commitment to the Organization and its purposes.

In line with this commitment to the Organization and its goals, Spain announced in 2005 its candidature to a non permanent seat in the Security Council for the biennium 2015-2016. We hope that, with the support of member States, we will be present in the Council and, from that position, keep on working in favor of the preservation of international security and stability. At the same time, we will strive for the promotion of development and human rights as fundamental pillars of a lasting peace.

Mr. President,

A year ago, Libyan, Egyptian and Tunisian men and women witnessed this meeting of the United Nations, while being still oppressed by dictatorial regimes. Today they own their future. They have fought for it. The international community has protected and supported them. They, on their side, have given us hope. We can now hope that change is possible. There is not an insurmountable challenge.

We are today certain that the international community, guided by the United Nations, is on the path of peace and freedom.

Thank you very much.