



Permanent Mission of Eritrea  
to the United Nations

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STATEMENT

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. OSMAN SALEH**  
**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE STATE OF ERITREA**

AT

**THE GENERAL DEBATE**  
**OF THE 67<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**NEW YORK, 1 OCTOBER 2012**

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

Let me start by extending my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, and your country, Serbia, for your election to preside over the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am confident that, with your extensive experience and diplomatic skill, you will lead this session of the General Assembly to a successful conclusion. I pledge the support of the Eritrean delegation in your noble efforts for the common good.

I wish to pay profound tribute to the outgoing President, His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al- Nasser, for his commendable work during the 66th session of the General Assembly. He indeed served us well. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his leadership and his report on the work of our United Nations at the outset of this General Debate.

Mr. President,

Almost seven decades have elapsed since the establishment of the United Nations and undoubtedly the world has witnessed much political, economic, social and technological progress. And yet it is clear that the United Nations has not succeeded in its paramount purpose of saving 'humanity from the scourge' of war. In the past 67 odd years, there is hardly a year in which there was no war raging somewhere in the world. What is particularly significant is the fact that in most of these wars, it is some of the big powers, who have been the main architects and actors in these wars-- the same powers who by virtue of their position in the United Nations Security Council should have shouldered the biggest responsibility for the maintenance of peace and stability.

On another front, and again despite the progress made, in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, hundreds of millions of people in the developing world, as well as in the developed countries, continue to suffer from the scourge of poverty, easily preventable diseases and avoidable premature deaths.

Mr. President,

In addition to the twin scourges of war and poverty, our world now faces an environmental threat that puts human livelihoods and survival at risk. It is therefore disconcerting that the current global political, economic and security architecture is inadequate to address the challenges that we all face. The United Nations system as has been repeatedly pointed out is indeed outdated. The General Assembly has

been emasculated; the Security Council is dominated by one powerful permanent member and increasingly becoming paralyzed. Change is being resisted by those who have believed they have benefitted from the old and anachronistic order. Respect for the sovereign equality, territorial integrity of nations and non-interference in their internal affairs, which constitute the pillars of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is being eroded and willfully flouted. The noble aims of protecting human rights and civilian lives are being selectively and cynically employed to justify military aggression, external intervention and imposition of sanctions--collective as well as unilateral--to destabilize nations, change governments and gain economic advantages.

Mr. President,  
Distinguished Delegates,

This summary assessment, Eritrea believes, is shared by the majority of member states of the United Nations. It is indeed the position of Africa, of most developing countries, the Non-Aligned movement, the emerging powers and many in the developed world. What this emerging consensus now needs is a concerted and coordinated effort to effect real change, including in the United Nations system, that would lead to a more peaceful, just and equitable world.

No part of the world is in need of positive change as the African continent, which remains marginalized and almost voiceless. And yet Africa is a continent of massive potential and there are already unmistakable, if tentative, signs of its awakening. A number of African countries are taking serious steps in the economic, political and social arenas and the revitalization of the African Union is apace. We hope that this African initiative, which will have salutary effect on the world economy and international governance, will be supported by a more conducive international environment and by the United Nations.

Mr. President,

Eritrea is convinced that our sub-region, the Horn of Africa, will overcome its current difficulties and make a substantial contribution to the reemergence of a dynamic and prosperous Africa. Despite the difficulties it has faced, it has made remarkable progress in providing and caring for its people and rebuilding its economy and has embarked on modernizing its infrastructure, including renewable energy, with a perspective of regional trade, investment and integration. It will continue to work to ensure a life of dignity and prosperity for its citizens in a peaceful and cooperative region in a more just and equitable world.

I thank you.