



LITHUANIA

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Address by

**H.E. DALIA GRYBAUSKAITĖ
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA**

**to the General Debate of the 67th Session
of the United Nations General Assembly**

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Excellency Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the last few years, the number of conflicts in the world is on the increase again. This causes deaths, injuries and loss of shelter for thousands of people. This leads to the delay of the development of our countries and stagnation of regional and global economy.

Our common goal: find ways to reduce tensions, disagreements and conflicts worldwide. The most important challenge in this respect – understanding the root causes of the conflicts and concentrating efforts on prevention, not on the removal of consequences.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to draw your attention to one specific area – energy.

Since the early ages, competition for natural resources has been the reason for conflicts:

- Energy resources are not equally distributed so there is an inequality in energy accessibility;
- Existing energy dependencies remain a cause for abuse, not for cooperation;
- Lack of clear and globally accepted rules and norms in the energy sectors contributes to continuing tensions.

Recurring gas and oil supply crises every year remind us that in a global environment, friction and disagreements over energy still lead to conflicts and tensions of all sorts. Being a small country without its own natural energy resources, Lithuania is well aware of the negative consequences of energy dependency in an environment without universal agreement on and compliance with clear rules of the game.

What is to be done?

First, we need to increase global energy sustainability. Here, I would like to congratulate Secretary General Ban Ki Moon for his “Sustainable Energy for All” initiative which is really relevant and timely. Improvement in energy effectiveness, diversification of energy supply, global accessibility to energy – these are for sure the goals to strive for.

Second, we need to make the existing inequalities in access to energy a source of cooperation, not tension. The use of energy dependency as an instrument for political or economic blackmail must be eliminated. Not only to ensure equality, but also to increase global competitiveness and effectiveness. With the still existing practices of price-fixing and abuse of monopolistic positions, which both distort competition, there can be no development, no security, no effectiveness.

Third, our answer to energy related conflict prevention should be international agreements which make clear that the use of energy to gain political goals is unacceptable. Responsibility for violations should be also clear and unavoidable. We have to grant international institutions greater discretion to launch probes and impose sanctions on activities that hinder the free flow of energy resources, impede diversification or set unfair prices for customers.

And one final point. There is no energy-related issue as dangerous as unsafe nuclear energy development. It is obvious that each country can decide on its national energy mix; however, each national decision to develop nuclear energy can have a devastating trans-boundary impact and should be extremely well grounded and researched.

There can be no sustainability, no development and no peaceful cooperation without nuclear safety. Mistakes in nuclear energy are too costly to be allowed. In this respect, we welcome the actions taken by the International Atomic Energy Agency to improve the existing system of international nuclear safety regulations. Lithuania holds to the position that nuclear safety standards should be strengthened and, if needed, legal international imperatives should be adopted.

The 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit clearly indicated that nuclear security and nuclear safety measures should be designed, implemented and managed in a coherent synergetic manner as they both have a common aim to protect the people and the environment.

Keeping to its commitment assumed at the Nuclear Security Summit, Lithuania has contributed to international efforts to increase global awareness on the existing energy insecurities and ways to prevent them by establishing the Nuclear Security Centre of Excellence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In order to tackle the causes, not consequences, of conflicts we have to be honest players. We must honestly define the problems. Speak openly about their reasons. Be clear and precise in naming the rules of the game. And last but not least – find in ourselves the political will to play according to these rules globally.

Thank you.