

Permanent Mission Of The Kingdom  
Of Saudi Arabia To The United Nations  
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الوفاء للدين والوطن والملك العربي  
السيد السعود بن عبدالعزيز  
لدى الامم المتحدة  
نيويورك

*Speech of*  
*His Royal Highness*  
***Prince Abdulaziz Bin Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz***  
*Head of the Delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*  
*Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs*  
*Before the*  
***United Nations General Assembly 67<sup>th</sup> Session***

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*In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, Most Compassionate*

*Mr. President,*

At the outset, it gives me great pleasure to convey to Your Excellency my sincere congratulations on your election as President of the 67th session of the UN General Assembly, wishing Your Excellency success in the performance of your duties and responsibilities, particularly during these critical circumstances experienced by the international community. I also take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to your predecessor the President of the UNGA at its 66th Session, His Excellency Ambassador Nassir Alnasser, who managed its entire works with wisdom and professionalism. Moreover, it gives me pleasure to once more commend the great efforts of His Excellency the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, serving the United Nations and promoting its message aiming to achieve international peace and security.

*Mr. President,*

As the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a founding member of the UN organization and one of the first signatories of its charter, it has always been keen to participate in every effort and endeavor that contributes to improve the performance of this international body; and advances its steps towards realizing the noble goals and objectives set forth in its charter. These are goals that we all look forward to implement and achieve.

We maintain our firm belief that the United Nations ability to carry out its duties is mainly dependent on its members' political will to practically implement those principles. It also requires the modernization and development of the UN principal organs in order to increase its representativeness and response to the changes and developments occurring in the world during its recent history. In particular, this requires enhancing the role of the General Assembly, reforming the Security Council, and strengthening the Economic and Social Council so as to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Goals and development issues.

*Mr. President,*

The Palestinian issue, which is the keystone of the Arab-Israeli conflict, remains a constant challenge for the United Nations since its inception and for more than sixty years. At the beginning of each UNGA's session, we diligently urge the international community to seriously and effectively act to put an end to this persisting and protracted conflict. We are of the view that this matter can be achieved only by responding to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, particularly their right to establish their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital, ending the Israeli occupation of Palestine and other occupied Arab territories in accordance with what is stipulated in the resolutions of international legitimacy and the principle of "Land for Peace", and the texts of the Arab Peace Initiative which aims at achieving a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace to this conflict.

Israel is the side that should bear full responsibility for the stagnation endured by the peace process. If negotiations is the means to achieve the desired progress towards the solution of this conflict, then the Palestinian side did its utmost in the context of seriousness and sincere desire to make these negotiations a success. Meanwhile, Israel did not spare any effort to disrupt, void, and distort these negotiations by concentrating on subsidiary issues and neglecting the core ones of this conflict.

Any negotiations to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot achieve any progress with the continuation of the policy of seizing more Palestinian land through building new settlements and expanding existing ones, tampering with the Arab-Islamic identity of the City of Jerusalem, and persisting with the policy of repression, torture, displacement, and blockade exercised by Israel against the Palestinian people.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which grants the Palestinian issue top priority, urges the international community represented by the United Nations to swiftly put an end to the tragedy of the Palestinian people and to provide its National Authority with all forms of support and assistance. Moreover, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that granting the State of Palestine full membership in the United Nations is their very normal and legitimate right that all of us must support. Saudi Arabia, for one, is sparing no effort to meet all its obligations towards the peace process and towards our Palestinian brothers by the provision of various types of support and assistance.

*Mr. President,*

Our current session of the GA is held at the same time in which the Syrian crisis reached exacerbated and complicated limits. This crisis resulted in tens of thousands of victims and hundreds of thousands of displaced and refugees who fled into neighboring countries. This conflict continues to expand and deepen the humanitarian disaster that beset them. All that is happening amidst a noticeable international community's failure due to the division in the Security Council as well as the failure of all proposed Arab and international initiatives due to the intransigence and arrogance of the Syrian regime.

We regret that this regime continues to believe that it can proceed with its suppressive procedures to control the situation without any due regard to the high humanitarian losses. The Security Council, which is entrusted with the responsibility of keeping peace and security, has failed so far to take a decision about the Syrian crisis and to stop the bloodshed therein. This matter gave the Syrian regime a green light to proceed with its crimes against the Syrian people, in a race against time, to accomplish its objectives using the most advanced means of killing and destruction.

Since day one of this crisis, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been keen to deal with it in accordance with the framework and resolutions of international legitimacy, with full respect to the principles of human rights and international humanitarian law, through the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the League of Arab States (LAS), the UN, and the outcomes of the Islamic Summit on the Status in Syria which was held in Honorable Makkah in August 2012.

While we welcome the appointment of His Excellency Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi as the Joint UN-LAS Special Representative for Syria, we believe that the success of his mission will require implementing a new strategy and a clear plan that aims to achieve a peaceful transition of power; and surpasses the six-point plan which the previous envoy was not able to implement any of them. Needless to say that the new representative will not be able to move forward unless the Security Council provides him with the necessary support he needs to deal with the Syrian crisis at both political and humanitarian levels.

*Mr. President,*

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia congratulates the Republic of Yemen for overcoming its political crisis through the peaceful transition of power, in accordance with the GCC initiative and its implementation mechanism and the wide international support it gained. We call upon our brothers in Yemen to hold the same positive and constructive approach, to support their leadership, and to confront foreign interference in Yemen's internal affairs in order to deal with security, economic, and social challenges; and to achieve their aspirations for security, stability, development and prosperity. Meanwhile, we call upon the international community to fulfill its pledged commitments for Yemen, in addition to providing it with all forms of support to achieve these goals. Saudi Arabia reaffirms its full support of all international efforts undertaken in this context. We have done all we can to effectively support, promote, and contribute to these efforts through the Friends of Yemen Conference held in Riyadh this year in May, the Donors' Conference held also in Riyadh earlier this month, and the participation in the Friends of Yemen Conference held in New York on Thursday, September 27, 2012.

*Mr. President,*

The crisis of the Iranian nuclear file is one of the most important challenges that threaten international peace and security in general, and the security and stability of the Gulf region in particular. In this context, my Country supports the ongoing efforts of the G5+1 to peacefully resolve this crisis, and in a manner that guarantees Iran and all countries in the region the right to peaceful use of nuclear energy according to the criteria and procedures of the International Atomic Energy Agency and under its supervision. On the other hand, we urge Iran to respond to these efforts and to implement the relevant Security Council's resolutions by cooperating with IAEA inspectors to monitor its nuclear facilities in order to put an end to this crisis.

In this regard, Saudi Arabia reaffirms the importance of making the Middle East a free zone from nuclear weapons and all other mass destruction weapons. We also stress the need that Israel places its nuclear facilities under the inspection and safeguards of the IAEA, and that it signs the Convention on Non-Proliferation. In addition, my Country stresses the importance that all parties to the relevant 2012 Conference on the Establishment of a zone-free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East adhere to the mandates and deadlines set in the Outcome Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

*Mr. President,*

The security and stability in the Gulf region cannot be achieved through the pursuit to possess deadly weapons nor through exercising an approach of hegemony and intervention in the internal affairs of countries in the region. Rather, this objective can be reached through establishing good relations based on good neighborliness and constructive cooperation. The GCC countries stressed their keenness to build positive and constructive relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran that are based on the principles of mutual respect and common interests. In this regard, my Government supports the position of the sisterly United Arab Emirates regarding its sovereignty claim over its three islands, namely Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa, occupied by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continues to watch with deep concern the threats and escalatory steps undertaken by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in these islands, and supports the use of peaceful means to address this issue either through bilateral negotiations or by resorting to the International Court of Justice.

*Mr. President,*

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia welcomes the successful parliamentary and presidential elections that recently took place in Somalia. We hope that this action would be a gateway to restore security and stability in that country. In addition, we pleased with the success of the mini-summit on the Republic of Somalia convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, on the sidelines of the current UNGA session. Emanating from the keenness of my Country to support the security and stability of Somalia, we have joined the International Contact Group on Somalia, and participated in relevant international efforts such as London Conference, Istanbul Conferences (1) and (2), and the Conference on Combating Piracy off the Somali Coast. The Kingdom calls upon all stakeholders and the international community to exert more efforts to achieve the desired objectives in Somalia.



*Mr. President,*

The phenomenon of terrorism is one of the most important challenges that we currently face. Combating this phenomenon is no longer a national matter confined to the borders of a specific state. Rather, it is a goal of the entire international community. Emanating from the principles and values in which it believes, the Kingdom has reaffirmed on many occasions its condemnation and denunciation of terrorism actions, and expressed its support to the eradication of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The Kingdom also stressed its cooperation and full readiness to join all international efforts to combat terrorism, and to effectively contribute in the context of a collective international effort under the umbrella of the United Nations to define the phenomenon of terrorism without selectivity or double-standards. This stance reflects the Kingdom's consistent and persistent policy against international terrorism and its perpetrators.

The Kingdom has suffered from terrorist operations in the past. It undertook, and still undertakes, numerous measures to combat this phenomenon at all national, regional, and international levels, including enacting necessary laws to eliminate terrorism and its funding sources. To this end, Riyadh hosted an international conference in 2005 which resulted in several recommendations, including a call for the establishment of the "United Nations Center for Counter Terrorism or the UNCCT which was later launched on September 19, 2011.

In this regard, the Kingdom notes the UNGA resolution titled, "Terrorist Attacks on Internationally Protected Persons" of 18 February 2012, and stresses the importance that all countries carry out their duties and responsibilities related to the protection and preservation of the security and safety of diplomatic personnel and the premises of diplomatic and consular missions, in addition to economic interests on their territories.

*Mr. President,*

Saudi Arabia cares about spreading a culture of tolerance and understanding between the followers of religions in order to promote dialogue between the followers of religions and cultures. Accordingly, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, called for a UNGA high-level meeting on promoting dialogue between religions and cultures for a world dominated by coexistence and acceptance of the other. This was reflected in the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques patronage of the Honorable Makkah Conference, and the 2008 Madrid World Dialogue which has resulted in the establishment of the King Abdullah Center for Dialogue among Followers of Religions and Cultures in Vienna. In addition, the foresight of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques was demonstrated by announcing the establishment of a center for dialogue between Islamic sects in the fourth special session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Honorable Makkah during the month of August 2012.

In order to maintain this noble humanitarian requirement promoted by all religions, we must disseminate and deepen the dialogue with a view to achieve peace between human beings, to avoid conflicts, to put an end to acts of aggression and arrogance, to respect religious, cultural, and civilizational particularity of peoples, and to encourage pursuit of positive interaction between civilizations, cultures, and religions.

In this regard, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia strongly condemns the act of an irresponsible group who produced an offensive movie about the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him. The Kingdom asserts its rejection of all acts that offend or disdain religions and their sacrosanct symbols. In this context, the Kingdom renews its call to enact necessary laws and regulations that forbid the defamation and disdain of religions and their sacrosanct symbols. (continued)

Meanwhile, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia condemns the acts of violence against the United States foreign missions, as well as any attack against any foreign mission around the world for any reason, regardless of the level of disagreement. Diplomatic envoys are protected by inviolability and immunity that is urged by our noble religion first and international treaties as well, due to the importance of diplomacy in preserving international interests.

*Mr. President,*

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has made many achievements in the field of human rights derived from the principles and tolerant Islamic legislation regarded as its constitution. During the past two decades, and in line with international developments in this field, the Kingdom joined several major international and regional conventions, in addition to several international bodies concerned with human rights. At the national level, the Kingdom established major (governmental and non-governmental) structures mandated to addressing human rights issues in all their aspects.

*Mr. President,*

The UNGA 67th Session is convened under international conditions that dominate the debate on issues related to economic and human development, as well as economic and social conditions experienced by developing countries following the global financial crisis, which became a major concern because of the vast differences between the north and the south. These differences are considered a primary cause of the instability that prevails in the world.

Through its participation in the G20, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia emphasizes its support of the efforts aiming to stabilize the global economy, to advance world trade, to take further action to liberalize trade and to avoid protectionist policies that impede the efforts to end the global financial crisis. Meanwhile, we should not ignore the matter of helping developing states to overcome the consequences of this crisis.

Furthermore, my Country believes that efforts to reform the international financial, monetary, and trade system should be channeled through existing institutions to build a global economic system that is based on a new partnership between developing and developed countries. This partnership should be on the basis of cooperation, justice, equality, transparency, and mutual benefits; and the need to grant these countries access for their products to reach the markets of developed countries.

*Mr. President,*

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an important donor country and a major partner in international development. The foreign aid and contributions directed to developing countries constitute an essential aspect of the Kingdom's policy towards developing countries since 1973 until today. This aid has reached more than \$100 billion dollars benefiting more than 95 developing countries in Asia, Africa, and other regions of the world. During the above-mentioned period, the Kingdom surpassed the designated UN Official Development Aid (ODA) objective. This made the Kingdom an active partner for developing countries through its direct support on financing development projects. The distribution of the Kingdom's aid varies among different mechanisms, including soft loans, grants, and relief assistance; in addition to forgiveness of debts owed to Saudi Arabia of more than \$6 billion.

In the area of assistance to eradicate poverty, Saudi Arabia is dedicating vigorous efforts bilaterally and through the specialized international organizations. The Kingdom made a contribution of one billion dollars to the Fight Against Poverty in the Islamic World Fund, pledged the allocation of \$500 million for the Energy for the Poor Initiative launched by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques during the Jeddah Energy Conference, and donated \$500 million to the World Food Programme to help poor countries to cope with rising prices of essential food commodities.

Concerning Energy Security, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia spared no effort in the pursuit of stability in the world oil markets in a manner that serve the world economy development. In this regard, we cannot overlook that energy security is not limited to the security of supply, but includes the security of demand as well. In addition, there is a need to avoid volatility and speculation in prices, and to avoid imposing discriminatory taxes on oil. Being aware of these facts, my Country announced the allocation of \$500 million in the form of soft loans to finance energy projects in developing countries, as well as making a contribution of \$300 million during the OPEC Summit held in Riyadh for the establishment of a special fund for Energy and Environmental and Climate Change Researches. As my Country continuously seeks that a dialogue takes place between energy producers and consumers, it welcomed the establishment of the Secretariat General of the International Energy Forum headquarters in Riyadh in order to promote such dialogue. Moreover, a charter was signed during the Energy Ministerial Meeting of February 2011.

*Mr. President,*

Climate change is an integral part of the subject of sustainable development in its three dimensions: Economic Development, Social Development, and Environmental Protection. They should be addressed in an integrated manner through the UNGA and the ECOSOC and their relevant subsidiary bodies. It should be noted that any intervention by the Security Council in this issue will lead to undue conflict among the terms of reference. Moreover, this matter could weaken the chances to achieve an international agreement in this area. In addition, it should be noted as well that it is necessary for all Member States to promote sustainable development through the adherence to Rio principles, in particular the principle of "Common but Differentiated Responsibilities."

I would also like to note that while Saudi Arabia is sharing the international community's aspirations for sustainable development, it has worked and will continue to do so in line with the conclusions of the Rio+20 Conference in Brazil during the month of June 2012. In this regard, the Kingdom vows to achieve this anticipated goal through economic and social development contributions that take into account the preservation of the environment.

*Mr. President,*

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the UN founding countries. Since the UN's inception, the Kingdom has participated in its meetings and conferences out of its belief in its noble principles and the role it can play in the service of humanity and its advancement.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be at the vanguard of any international efforts aiming to implement and achieve the principles and objectives of the United Nations, and to reach the security, stability, and prosperity we all aspire.

*Thank you all for your kind attention.*