



*Check against delivery*

**Statement  
by His Excellency Mr. Hamrokhon Zarifi  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan**

**at the general debate of the 67<sup>th</sup> session  
of the United Nations General Assembly**

*New York, September 29, 2012*

**Distinguished Mr. President,**

First of all, allow me to extend to you, Mr. Vuk Jeremic, my sincere congratulations on your election to this lofty and responsible office of the President of the General Assembly. I am convinced that your extensive professional experience will contribute to successful work of the 67<sup>th</sup> GA session of our universal Organization.

It is my great pleasure to welcome Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and to express sincere appreciation for his tireless efforts in achieving the United Nations goals.

**Mr. President,**

The recent developments in the world proved once again that it is impossible to address global and regional issues without strengthening the **central role of the United Nations** in the international affairs and without collective initiatives in world politics, with due respect of the norms of international law. In this regard, it is becoming obvious that it is necessary to carry out a rational reform of the Organization, as a result of which the renewed United Nations will emerge capable to respond to the developments in the world in a quick and adequate manner, and to effectively meet numerous global challenges and threats of a new generation.

The UN efforts at strengthening peace building activities of the United Nations deserve further comprehensive support. In this regard, it is my pleasure to note that Tajikistan continues to make a considerable contribution to this area by participating in the **UN peacekeeping operations**.

Tajikistan is convinced that **respect for cultural and religious diversity**, as well as dialogue among civilizations is essential for global peace and understanding. In this regard, we are deeply concerned at the increase in many parts of the world, of efforts to denigrate religions, in particular Islam, by misusing freedom of expression. We strongly condemn these acts.

There is no doubt that creation of comprehensive legal norms on **human rights** is one of the major accomplishments of the United Nations. Human rights, alongside with peace, security and development, are the pillars of the UN system. Being a signatory to the major international treaties on human rights, Tajikistan, in a consistent manner, undertakes relevant measures aimed at ensuring protection and promotion of human rights in the country. Having the intention to make a bigger contribution to the implementation of the noble goals of the HRC, the Government of Tajikistan has made a decision to present its candidature to this important body for the term 2015-2017. In this regard, we sincerely hope that the UN member states will render their valuable support to our candidature.

**Mr. President,**

Within the context of the withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from **Afghanistan** scheduled for 2014, “the Afghan theme” will acquire an exclusive importance not only for the region but for the entire world. We believe that social and economic development of Afghanistan is the key for ensuring stable peace in this country. For this reason, the international assistance rendered to Afghanistan should be aimed, first and foremost, at its utmost economic rehabilitation, further strengthening of its social sphere, job creation, etc. In this regard, realization of projects on construction of railroads, motorways, power transmission lines, gas pipelines and etc. that connect Afghanistan with Tajikistan and other countries of the region is of utmost importance.

Last March Tajikistan hosted the Fifth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA V), which submitted specific proposals and projects in various areas that contribute to regional cooperation with the participation of Afghanistan. As a close neighbor of Afghanistan Tajikistan has actively participated in the rehabilitation of the Afghan economy and its social infrastructure. We are convinced that the processes of multidimensional regional cooperation should involve Afghanistan in full.

**Mr. President,**

One of the important areas that demand cooperative efforts on the part of the international community is **prevention of illicit drug trafficking**. It is essential that the international community unite the measures aimed at reducing both the demand and supply of drugs, and integrate the efforts undertaken at the national level into the international strategy for drug control. Tajikistan has designed its own anti-narcotics strategy, which includes short-term and long-term programs of action, of cooperation and interaction on the bilateral, regional and multilateral basis. Tajikistan has started developing a new anti-narcotics strategy for the period of 2013 through 2020.

**Mr. President,**

The Ottawa Convention calls the international community to put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by **anti-personnel mines** that kill or maim hundreds of people, mostly innocent and defenseless civilians, and specially children, and obstruct economic development and reconstruction. Regrettably, suffering and misery caused by anti-personnel landmines is a heavy burden to that part of the population of my country that resides along the border with the neighboring state. In this regard, we are committed to a full and effective implementation of the Convention, in cooperation with all parties concerned. Tajikistan is a strong advocate of a mine-free Central Asia.

**Mr. President,**

The year 2012 will be remembered as a history making year. This year, 20 years after the first meeting in Rio, the representatives of the countries gathered over there again, with the aim to discuss and identify the most effective ways of achieving **sustainable development**. The Rio+20 reiterated the commitment to the course towards sustainable development and ensuring economically, socially and ecologically sustainable future for our planet, “the future we want”.

Ensuring sustainable economic development aimed at improving the population living standards and quality of life is the strategic goal of the Government of Tajikistan. Special attention is given to effective, rational and protective use of natural resources that constitute the main dimension of the “green economy”.

Making access to energy a priority issue is the key to achieving all MDGs. It is especially urgent for developing countries and remote mountain territories located far away from major infrastructures. In this regard, my country is no exception, and access to energy is the key to social and economic development and reduction of poverty.

However, we have to state with great regret that due to the lack of mutual understanding and cooperation in the region, and due to disregarding of the legitimate rights and vital interests of Tajikistan, over the last ten years our country has been experiencing a severe power shortage during winter seasons.

Because of the lack of other sources of energy, it is vitally important for Tajikistan, which has an enormous hydro energy potential, to develop hydropower in a planned and integrated manner. According to international treaties, Tajikistan has all the rights to use its natural resources, including hydro-power, for the benefit of its people. At the same time we declare with all responsibility from this lofty rostrum that the Republic of Tajikistan, while developing its hydropower potential, has no intention to pursue exclusively its own interests at the expense of anybody else. On the contrary, we are sincere advocates of mutually beneficial regional cooperation and partnership. Just in this context one should regard the active cooperation of Tajikistan with the World Bank on developing technical and economic, social and ecological assessment of the Roghun hydropower station, the project that is vitally important for my country.

At the same time we expect that during the implementation of the assessment, the parties concerned in the region will abstain from hasty and not thoroughly thought out statements and actions that can run counter to the existing international agreements and spirit of friendship, cooperation and good neighborhood.

**Mr. President,**

Tajikistan attaches great importance to the interests of the **landlocked developing countries**, which are vulnerable due to their geographical location. It stands to reason, that geographic isolation of Tajikistan and lack of access to sea constitute a serious obstacle on the way to its sustainable development. There is no doubt, that under the circumstances, a reliable and unimpeded operation of transportation and communication arteries that connect Tajikistan via the neighboring countries to the outer world is becoming vitally important.

In this regard, we call for the elimination of all artificial and economically unsubstantiated barriers and obstacles in the transportation and communication connections among the countries of the region that do not contribute to development and strengthening of the regional cooperation and partnership. We express our hope that the relevant UN missions in the region will pay due attention to this issue.

**Mr. President,**

In 2013 the international community will mark the **International Year of Water Cooperation**, which was initiated by Tajikistan, and which coincides with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of proclamation of March 22 as World Water Day. To implement the goals of the International Year of Water Cooperation Tajikistan proposes to hold in 2013 a number of events, in particular, the GA thematic session, and an international conference dedicated to the issues of water cooperation. In this regard, my country is going to submit a draft resolution for consideration of the GA 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee. I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to express our sincere hope that the UN member states will render support to this initiative.

**Mr. President,**

Tajikistan, as a strong supporter of a broad and comprehensive cooperation, believes that only collective coordinated efforts, effective regional and international cooperation can serve as a foundation for joint success, and can make the world a better and safer place and life of people on Earth more dignified and happier.

Thank you.