



Statement by

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before

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Pls. Check Against Delivery

Mr. President,

First, I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as President of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, and I am confident that your experience in international affairs will contribute to the success of this session. I would also like to commend your predecessor, H.E. Vuk Jeremic, for his wise leadership of the last session, and also thank H.E. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and his staff, for the tireless efforts they have been making to promote global peace, security and development.

Mr. President,

The UAE continues to firmly believe in the goals and principles of the United Nations that are enshrined in its Charter, calling for the protection of international peace and security, promotion of peaceful coexistence among nations and peoples through the peaceful resolution of international disputes, and respect for provisions of international law and non-interference in the internal affairs of states. These goals have also called for creating a favorable climate for international relations based on tolerance, non-violence, recognition of the other, and respect for human rights and people. My country has followed this approach in its regional and international relations.

Nevertheless, we cannot conceal our deep concern at the recent events in the Arab Region which were associated with sectarian strife, escalated terrorist attacks and growing incitement to violence, which in turn led the region into a state of extreme polarization, whereby stability

and development were severely impacted. In the Arab Gulf, we see how extremism and terrorism in the Kingdom of Bahrain are seeking to sabotage security and stability, and destroy a history of tolerance free from any sort of sectarianism. The situation was more aggravated by the politicization and exploitation of religion to exclude and marginalize the other spectrums of society, when, up until then, they all used to live in harmony and peaceful co-existence. All these have led to widespread fears about the fate of the national state and the implications of that, which include shaking the pillars of the State, wasting its resources, and undermining its economy. You must be aware that such difficult conditions put the young people of the region at the risk of falling into the clutches of extremism and violence, especially in a climate of growing despair and unemployment.

This affirms the paramount importance of the UAE's efforts aimed at promoting the culture of moderation and non-violence, and fighting extremism in all its forms. In this regard, I refer in particular to my country's initiative to establish the Hedayah Center for Countering Violent Extremism. The UAE actually proposed its establishment at a meeting held in the framework of the United Nations.

In this context, I condemn with the strongest terms the cowardly terrorist attack committed against a commercial center in Nairobi, Kenya, which resulted in the death of dozens of innocent victims.

Mr. President,

The UAE is deeply disappointed at the inability of the international community until now to put an immediate end to the worsening tragedy suffered by the Syrian people, caused by the military actions and indiscriminate and systematic bombings by Syrian forces, which has so far killed more than 100,000 people and injured and displaced millions of people, being to date the most serious violation of international law and international humanitarian law.

We are deeply concerned about the growing serious implications of this conflict on Syria and the entire region, and we strongly condemn and reject all crimes against humanity committed by the Syrian regime, especially the chemical attack against Ghouta, Damascus, which killed thousands of civilians and children. We, therefore, call upon the international community to take all necessary measures to punish the Syrian regime for its massacres against its civilians. All of you must be aware of the frustration we feel and the majority of countries in the region feel regarding the disabling of the United Nations mechanisms from acting against the aggressive acts of the Syrian regime against its people. The failure to act by international organizations is directly responsible for the aggravating humanitarian tragedy we witness in Syria and for the threat against the Syrian State, community and people.

The UAE, which has fulfilled its duties regarding the ongoing relief operations for the Syrian people and continues to provide aid, hospitals, tools and the necessary medical teams, calls for concerted international and regional efforts to secure the humanitarian needs of the displaced Syrians inside Syria and across the borders to alleviate their suffering.

Mr. President,

As our region searches for stability and a guiding compass for its future, Egypt emerges as a pivotal state whose stability and domestic peace indicates that the region has begun to recover. Proceeding from this understanding, the UAE is following with great interest the positive developments taking place in Egypt as it firmly believes in the pivotal role of Egypt in ensuring stability, development and prosperity, and that a stable and calm Egypt is the cornerstone of security and peace, not only in the Arab region but for the whole world.

Egypt witnessed the second wave of revolution on the 30th of June this year, when tens of millions of the Egyptian People expressed their determined will to draw up a roadmap that shapes a better future for their country and lays an inclusive democratic path based on the participation of all spectrums of society without exclusion and within a policy characterized by moderation, non-violence and without the use of religion as a means of exclusion and classification or breaching sectarianism and hatred.

Therefore, the UAE believes that the sovereign measures taken by the Egyptian Government to protect national security as well as the steps taken for implementing the popularly supported roadmap give grounds for optimism and enhances the credibility of the Egyptian Government.

I take this opportunity to urge the international community to support Egypt in this critical stage and support the sincere efforts of its interim government in laying the foundations of stability, development and civilian constitutional rule.

The UAE recognizes the suffering of the Arab region from the interference by others in its internal affairs and the ensuing threats to national statehood, and warns against the interference in the internal affairs of Egypt, and calls for refraining from disrupting its march towards stability and democracy.

Mr. President,

All observers in this hall are aware of the interconnected nature of the issues of the Arab region, where peace emerges as a central and relevant issue to all that is happening there. Many decades have passed and the Palestinian People still look forward to realizing their right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state with its capital Al Quds Al Shareef, based on international legal instruments, which recognized their right to establish a state according to the borders of June 1967 as confirmed in the resolutions of the United Nations, and in accordance with the Arab Peace Initiative. In this connection, I wish to take this opportunity to welcome the re-launching of peace talks under the auspices of the United States, and we hope that these talks will lead to positive results towards the establishment of a Palestinian State. We also welcome the constructive position of the European Union for its non-recognition of the legitimacy of the Israeli settlements and for ceasing dealings with them. The UAE is ready to contribute to a successful outcome of this

new initiative to achieve security, peace and economic growth in this important part of the world.

Mr. President,

Security and stability in the Gulf region represent a high priority in our balanced policy, which derives its principles from the UN Charter and the provisions of international law, especially those calling for peaceful co-existence, confidence-building, good neighborliness, mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of the State, and the pursuit of peaceful means in the resolution of conflicts and disputes. On the basis of these principles, my Government expresses, once again, its regret regarding the continued Iranian occupation of our three islands: Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs, and demands for the restoration of the UAE's full sovereignty over these islands. We emphasize that all actions and measures taken by the Iranian occupation authorities are null and void, and are contrary to international law and to all norms and common human values. We, therefore, call upon the international community to urge Iran to respond to the repeated peaceful, sincere calls of the United Arab Emirates for a just settlement of this issue, either through direct, serious negotiations or by referral to the International Court of Justice, to settle this dispute in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter and the provisions of international law.

Proceeding from the firm principals of our regional and international relations, we welcome the declared approach of H.E. Hassan Rohani, President of Iran, and we affirm that our country will sincerely build on such an approach in the interest of promoting security, stability and prosperity in the region.

Mr. President,

There is a lot of debate about Iran's nuclear program, and many suspicions surround it. Hence, we urge Iran to constructively cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in a transparent and clear manner to dispel all suspicions surrounding its activities in order to avoid any negative consequences arising from the absence of such cooperation.

On the other hand, the UAE believes that peaceful use of nuclear energy has become an urgent requirement to meet the growing demand for energy. We are proud to have a successful pioneering experience in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which is surrounded with all guarantees of security and safety. The UAE also opened the way for the production of renewable energy and development of clean energy techniques as a contribution on its part to humanity towards protecting the planet from the negative effects of climate change.

Mr. President,

The UAE firmly believes in the importance of human development at national and international levels, which can only be achieved through respect for human rights and equality among all people without discrimination on grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion, language or any other reason. This requires respect for human dignity, the renunciation of

violence and the prohibition of torture and degrading treatment. In this context, the UAE is very encouraged by the positive response regarding its Universal Periodic Review report, which was adopted by the members of the Human Rights Council, and where the achievements of the UAE were commended.

Achieving overall human development requires the creation of an environment that is conducive to tolerance and moderation, and is free of any incitement to hatred for any reason among the people. In this context, it is necessary to support and promote dialogue among different cultures and religions, without arrogance or superiority from any culture, as each culture has something to give and something to gain from the other cultures.

The empowerment of women, recognition of their central role in communities, and protection against discrimination in the various fields are imperative needs for the international community. The UAE is proud of the significant measures it has taken in this regard, which guarantees the UAE a high ranking among the countries of the region in this respect. The UAE has also made significant strides in the fight against human trafficking and developed national legislation to stand firmly against this heinous crime.

Finally, achieving sustainable development for all people is a great priority for the United Nations and its Member States, which will require the promotion of scientific and technical cooperation as well as the transfer of technology between developed and developing countries, in order to achieve the common good of all the peoples of the world.

Thank you Mr. President,