



Republic of Iraq

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At the general debate of the 68th session of the United Nations

General Assembly

New York 27 September 2013

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

Mr. Secretary General of the United Nations

Mr. John Ashe, President of the 68th session of the General Assembly

Your Majesties and Highnesses,

Your Excellencies, Heads of delegations

Peace be upon you and God's mercy and blessings

It gives me pleasure to join you at the current session of The General Assembly to discuss the vital issue of post 2015 sustainable development and the achievement of its goals, which we hope all of us will be able to accomplish.

Having overcome the serious consequences of the economic and social policies pursued by the former regime, which were not based on scientific grounds, but on the regime's (personal) reckless whims, Iraq has sought to translate what was agreed upon by world leaders in 2000, notably the eight development goals, into practical and concrete steps. By adopting plans, strategies and enacting laws providing for the necessary messages and mechanisms, Iraq has endeavoured to achieve the essence of sustainable development, namely the integration of its three dimensions: economic, environmental and social.

Iraq has been working at the level of financial and monetary policies, to increase the financial flows to its public budget which is expected to reach in 2015 approximately \$150 billion. 40% of the envisioned budget will be allocated to requisite investment expenditure with a view to providing basic services improve infrastructure and reinforce the role of the Iraqi economy.

Iraq has achieved steady growth in the economic sector(s) through its 2013-2017 development plan. However, oil is still the main engine for the rest of the sectors due to Iraq's abundant reserves of oil and gas which surpass confirmed reserve estimates by a very large margin. Estimates put the potential of extractable oil reserves at 250 billion barrels and that of gas at more than 250 trillion cubic feet.

We expect to double oil production by the end of the 2013-2017 development plan with a steady increase in oil exports, which are expected to reach in 2015 approximately three million seven hundred and fifty thousand barrels per day.

Therefore, the 2010-2014 development plan focused on environmental sustainability and the green economy in Iraq. Strategic goals have been identified for the aforementioned plan and for the 2013-2017 National Development Plan which has been recently approved by the Council of Ministers, as follows:

1. Adopting a poverty alleviation strategy as one of the components for the attainment of sustainable development, where poverty rate fell from 23 % in 2007 to 19 % in 2012. It is hoped that it will further fall to 16 % in 2017.
2. Reducing unemployment rate from 15 % in 2007 to 11 % in 2012 with a potential expected decline to 6% in 2017.
3. Increasing the average per capita income from \$ 3,000 in 2009, to nearly \$ 6,000 in 2012 with an annual growth rate of 15.9 % clearly indicating noticeable economic progress.
4. Reducing infant mortality to 18 deaths per 1,000 births in 2017. It is noteworthy that those figures fell from 32 in 2011 to 22 deaths in 2013. The plan also aims at the reduction of the under five years mortality rate to 24 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2017 following their decline from 37 in 2011 to 28 deaths in 2013.
5. Raising primary school enrollment to 95% in 2017 from its 2012 figure of 92 %.
6. Increasing secondary school enrollment to 40 % and that of university to 20% by 2017.
7. Curbing desertification through the expansion of land reclamation where approximately 4 million acres have been reclaimed. We are imbued with the hope of reclaiming 2.5 million additional acres by the end of the plan.
8. Utilizing modern techniques in irrigation and increasing the latent energy of water resources by focusing on the economic exploitation thereof.

9. Minimizing the quantities of burned gases associated with oil production by devising Plans for fully investment therein in 2015.
10. Beginning the implementation of a housing program for the poor and low-income people where one million housing units will be available by the end of the plan.
11. Achieving self-sufficiency in terms of electricity production as it is envisioned to reach 22,000 thousand megawatts in 2015, which means a 15 % surplus over peak consumption, while the production of electricity in 2003, was around 2,500 megawatts.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We deem it necessary to emphasize at this session the following significant points:

1. Calling for strengthened cooperation between the countries of the North and the South and for the fulfillment of the financial obligations recommended by previous international conferences to help achieve sustainable development.
2. Facilitating the transfer of technology to developing countries to reduce the gap between them and the developed world and to seriously contribute to solving problems caused by global warming and climate change.
3. Addressing the problems caused by water scarcity, which destabilized certain regions of the world, and stressing the need to determine the fair water quotas among riparian States on international rivers.
4. Extending special support for people suffering from conflict and international economic sanctions, which constitute significant obstacles to the attainment of sustainable development.
5. Appropriately addressing pressures caused by unsustainable production and consumption patterns particularly in the areas of deforestation, water scarcity, food waste and elevated carbon emissions.

6. Building effective and accountable institutions, promoting the rule of law, property rights, freedom of expression and that of the media in addition to the administration of justice and the fight against corruption.
7. Ensuring that post- 2015 plan is underpinned by a new spirit of solidarity, responsibility, cooperation and integration built on a common understanding of our humanity and on mutual respect through the involvement of more participants from poor and women groups, civil society and local governments, academia and philanthropic institutions and charities.
8. Advocating the need for governments to play a leading role in the field of education and the need to recognize that education is a shared responsibility between families, local communities and civil society organizations and then the universal contribution to the improvement and development of its ways and means.
9. Including as one of the priorities to achieve the objectives of sustainable development beyond 2015 is the elimination of violence against women and gender equality in decent work and decision-making positions as well as comprehensive economic and social security, in addition to international cooperation and integration in addressing the issues of sustainable development and the fight against extreme poverty.
10. Stressing the importance of existing standards in the field of human rights, the right to compensation for victims and redress in cases of human rights violation.
11. We look forward to the completion of tasks by the Working Group that came out of Rio +20 on Financing for Development, as well as to the creation of sound foundations in the field of financing the goals of sustainable development and the post 2015 development agenda, in a sustainable and predictable fashion.

Here I have to stress, ladies and gentlemen, that no pre or post 2015 sustainable development is attainable with the existence of organized terrorism thriving on the bloodshed of innocent people as it claims their lives. This scourge has adopted extremism as its approach, death as its craft, violence as

its means, hatred as its culture and senseless and indiscriminate murder as its hobby. Such phenomenon calls for a strict and pragmatic stance by the entire world to face up to this brutal ferocious crazy and aggravating assault through international cooperation to dry up financial, intellectual and armament resources of terrorism, and to save humanity from this scourge and save the universe from its effects, dangers and harms. We wish also to confirm that no sustainable development could be achieved while the drums of war are beating in more than one place in the world because the concepts of peace, development and life cannot be upheld in conjunction with the will to bring about death and wars and genocides. Nor could development be achieved in the absence of peace and security. Therefore, there will be no political stability and no development without peaceful coexistence and security and stability where human beings can rest have shelter.

Proceeding from the above, Iraq continues to call in its initiatives for a peaceful solution to each and every land where the smell of death, gunpowder, witness the scenes of destruction and bloodshed prevail, because the logic of force cannot produce peace nor can a death instrument or a war mill bring about security or create development or growth.

Hence, we in Iraq, whose people suffered tremendously from the horrors of war caused by the recklessness and follies of the defunct Saddam regime, are deeply concerned by the worsening events and tense situation on our borders with Syria, a country with which we have over 600 km long borders. This is why we consider the Syrian conflict a serious threat to our security, stability and the integrity of our land and people. For this reason we have put forward our initiative to resolve the Syrian crisis peacefully in order to avoid a devastating humanitarian disaster unfolding in our neighboring country and on our borders which could undermine all aspects of development, stability and prosperity that we and you aspire to achieve in our vitally important region. Therefore, I invite you all, ladies and gentlemen, to support the Iraqi initiative in your endeavors to serve peace, security, stability and prosperity. Otherwise, the region will forge ahead towards the unknown. Our region is beleaguered by concerns of regional and large-scale war that may begin or triggered by a small spark. No one could guess the scope, trends, trajectories or the time of such a conflict. Consequently, no

sustainable development, stability or prosperity could be hoped for in a region, which is already fragile, explosive and complex. This is the message of the government and people of Iraq to you. In the aftermath of the fall of the dictatorial regime, Iraq has resorted to democratic mechanisms as the sole means for the peaceful transfer of power, for we believe in the freedom, dignity and rights of human beings. We have adopted a policy of open doors in our foreign relations with the whole world and are always looking for common denominators to overcome disagreement through positive dialogue based on justice and responsible involvement with neighboring countries, our region, and the world. We are strongly convinced that peaceful solutions are the most efficient means to settle all the current problems between peoples, nations and governments. We reject violence, terrorism and aggression, irrespective of its sources. We have launched a call for tolerance, national reconciliation and cooperation with a view to attain communal coexistence, social peace, stability and prosperity. This is what was adopted by the National Conference on social peace, which was held recently in Baghdad and was signed with the Code of Honor by most of Iraq's leaders and national symbols.

Iraq suffered for more than two decades from international sanctions because of the invasion of the State of Kuwait by the former regime, however the new Iraq has managed, through its cooperation with the international community on the one hand and through the development of its brotherly relations with the neighboring State of Kuwait, to overcome the effects of the sanctions and work together with the UN Security Council in adopting UN Security Council resolution No. 2107 of 27.09.2013 which terminated Iraq's obligations under chapter VII, and thus the crises and the problems suffered by the two brotherly countries of Iraq and Kuwait became part of the past. Today, we look forward together to build the present to be a springboard and a solid foundation for a prosperous future for the generations that will reflect its positive effects on the entire region.

Our staunch faith in our brethren in humanity does not preclude us from taking the just side of the oppressed, the disadvantaged and the vulnerable nor does it prevent us from showing solidarity with the just causes of our Arab and Islamic nation, raising our voices in defense of their rights, humanity

and causes, foremost among them, those of the Palestinian people who are still suffering from systematic oppression, continuous settlement activities that violate their rights and threaten their identity and existence, a situation that makes it incumbent on the world and international institutions to assume their role and responsibilities and stand by a people who only demand the realization of their rights, freedom, justice and independence and the establishment of a viable Palestinian state, and in its absence the Middle East region will remain prone to tension and instability.

For the sake of a Middle East living in peace and security, we reiterate the call for the establishment of a Middle East free of nuclear weapons, with emphasis on the need to hold the Helsinki Conference on the establishment of this region as soon as possible, because the failure of international efforts in this area will adversely affect the credibility of the NPT nuclear proliferation, which could lead to an arms race which increases the frequency of tension and instability.

Brothers and Sisters,

Whereas the UN is the framework we have agreed upon to be the forum for international cooperation to address the problems and challenges that we face reached through multilateral negotiations , we believe that the time has come to repair bodies in the forefront of the UN Security Council as the body first on international peace and security in order to be consistent with the aspirations of the peoples of the world in the twenty - first century and more representative, transparent and able to meet the challenges.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I avail myself of this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Iraqi people, sincere thanks and profound appreciation to all those who contributed to helped Iraq to be lifted out of Chapter VII. We wish each and every nation all over the world a free, safe, secure life with dignity and promising prosperous future.

Peace be upon you and God's mercy and blessings

