



नेपाल NEPAL

ADDRESS

BY

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

MR. KHIL RAJ REGMI

CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

AND

LEADER OF THE NEPALESE DELEGATION

**AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 68TH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

NEW YORK, 28 SEPTEMBER 2013

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the Presidency of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I repose full confidence in you to steer the deliberations of the Assembly to a fruitful conclusion and assure you of our full cooperation in the discharge of your important responsibilities.

I take this opportunity to extend sincere thanks to the outgoing President, His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić, for having successfully presided over the Sixty-seventh session of the Assembly.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations for his able and visionary leadership and excellent reports on issues before the Assembly.

Mr. President,

I bring with me the message of peace and non-violence from Lumbini, the birthplace of Gautama Buddha, the apostle of peace, and the greetings and best wishes from the Government and people of Nepal. Nepal has an unflinching faith in the principles and purposes of the United Nations as enshrined in its Charter. Nepal upholds the centrality and indispensability of the United Nations in forging global peace and security, development and human freedom as well as its role in the promotion of multilateralism befitting the need of our age.

It is an irony that one eighth of world population has to live without enough food at a time when 150 percent of the earth's annual regenerative capacity is being consumed in total. And, nearly one billion people will still be forced to live in extreme poverty by 2015. Looking at this unfair and unjust scenario, one can hardly envision global sustainability without a system of an economic growth and development that ensures the progress and wellbeing of people on this planet in an equitable, inclusive and judicious manner. We can hardly realize sustainable development when pervasive poverty, unsustainable consumption and production patterns and spiraling environmental degradation are allowed to continue.

Nepal attaches great importance to the full attainment of the MDGs. In the Rio+20, our countries saw wisdom to take the MDGs forward with greater vigour through universally applicable sustainable development goals. The report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons reminds us that there is a need to build on the foundation of the MDGs, leaving nobody behind in the global development efforts. Clearly, any new development agenda that does not keep the elimination of extreme poverty at the centre stage loses the spirit of sustainability. I, therefore, call upon all Member States to direct concerted efforts to complete the unfinished tasks of MDGs before embarking on post-2015 development agenda and the subsequent Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. President,

The High Level Panel has set forth a vision for shaping a common destiny for the global community through inclusive economic growth, human progress and sustainable development. This collective vision needs to be translated into concrete action with deliverable goals and targets that can be measured globally and locally based on the Rio principles.

We underscore the need to breathe life into the post-2015 development framework with the principles of universal human rights, equity and sustainability. For this, we should take into account its global applicability on one hand, and the regional, national and sub-national circumstances and priorities, on the other. We believe all processes relating to SDGs should reconcile these fundamental aspects, especially in the interest of the poor and marginalized countries and societies. Nepal is constructively engaged in mainstreaming the concerns of LDCs into the new global development agenda.

While no country is immune to ominous effects of climate change, countries like Nepal have to bear the brunt more disproportionately in stark contrast to their negligible contribution to emission of greenhouse gases. Nepal is the 5th most vulnerable country in terms of climate change risks. Multiple disaster risks in overwhelming proportions and increased vulnerability that we have to face also threaten the fragile mountain ecosystem, fabulous diversities, as well as lives, livelihoods and heritage in Nepal.

We welcome the understanding reached by the Member States on a firm timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement in Doha during the 18th Session of the UNFCCC. We call on all for an early conclusion of climate change negotiations with binding emission commitments and an ensured, enhanced, predictable and easily accessible financing to the most vulnerable countries like Nepal for speedy implementation of suitable adaptation and mitigation measures.

LDCs face severe structural constraints and multiple vulnerabilities, and are most off-track in achieving MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals. The Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA) has outlined eight priority areas for implementation to overcome these constraints and enable a half of the LDCs graduate by the year 2020. However, creation of external and internal enabling environments through synergy of efforts between the development partners and the LDCs is necessary to realize this most urgent yet ambitious goal. Integration of the IPOA priorities into all our relevant plans and programs and the ongoing post-2015 development discourse at the UN is a must towards this end.

Nepal has set the goal of graduating from the LDC status by 2022. The Government is committed to pursue this goal by mainstreaming the internationally defined priority areas. I call for genuine partnerships and enhanced level of cooperation for a full, effective and speedy implementation of the IPOA and other internationally agreed development goals with sufficient and predictable funding mechanisms so that our goal becomes a reality.

Nepal is constrained to benefit from trade-induced growth due to high transit transport costs emanating from structural problem from its landlocked situation. Remoteness from the market, marginalization and lack of integration into the regional and global value chains affect the competitive edge of our trade and attractiveness as an investment destination. Despite tremendous advancement in technology and innovation enjoyed in trade promotion in the

world, Nepal is yet to catch up with the trend owing to the lack of basic transport and trade infrastructure that facilitate trade. We look forward to the ten-year review process of Almaty Programme of Action, and forging a *successor* plan of action capable of addressing the specific concerns and development aspirations of the LLDCs.

LDCs are still waiting for a harvest of the Doha Development Round and full implementation of the decisions of Hong Kong WTO Ministerial Meeting and other subsequent meetings. Forty nine LDCs represent less than one percent of world trade. The recent review of Aid for Trade further confirmed its delivering capacity and noted that, along with Enhanced Integrated Framework as a vehicle, it helps address supply side constraints, enhance productive capacity and promote economic diversification. We will participate at the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali in December with the expectation that the core issues of the LDCs consisting of the full implementation of the Duty Free, Quota Free provision, adoption of simple and flexible preferential rules of origin and operationalization of LDCs service waiver would be addressed effectively.

The structural deficiency and democratic deficit of globalization must be addressed by making it more inclusive and responsive to the need of the poor and marginalized people across the world. More attention must be given to international migration and its potential contribution to development of the destination and sending countries, and to ensure that globalization is also fair to the bottom billion of the South.

International migration is a cross-cutting developmental issue of common concern. Migration bears significance globally, but more so to countries like Nepal, where nearly 1500 people leave for foreign employment every day. While remittances constitute nearly 25 percent of Nepal's GDP, Nepalese migrant workers fill up the labour market gaps and contribute significantly to the well-being of the people and economic development of the destination countries. It is extremely important to keep human values and dignity at the centre of administration and governance related to migration. It is also necessary to define the roles and responsibilities of countries of origin, transit and destination to ensure the basic rights of the migrant population and show respect to their contribution to development.

The North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation are becoming more significant than ever before for forging an inclusive development agenda and ensuring the prevalence of equality and justice in the world. It is vital that the North fulfills commitment of resources made to the developing South. Likewise, South-South cooperation should be promoted through the sharing of development experience and transfer of technology, and exploiting latent synergies and complementarities in the development and integration of trade, investment and infrastructure facilities.

Mr. President,

Akin to the ideals of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM), we uphold the view that an environment of lasting peace and security conducive to people-centric development can only be created through strengthened multilateralism. As a distinct multilateral forum and moral voice of the developing world, NAM has a greater role to play in fostering international peace and security at the UN and beyond. We believe that NAM must strive to pursue the issues of

reforming the UN alongside Bretton Woods Institutions, which shape global social and economic policies in general, and financial architecture in particular, to make them more inclusive and responsive to the needs of the developing world.

Nepal reiterates its call for general and complete **disarmament** of all weapons of mass destruction, including biological, chemical, radiological and nuclear - in a time bound manner. Our efforts towards the goal of total nuclear disarmament must be matched by efforts to achieve the non-proliferation of other weapons of mass destruction. As host to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament (RCPD) for Asia and the Pacific in Kathmandu, we stand for strengthening regional initiatives for peace through dialogues, education and awareness, and subsequent confidence-building measures.

Nepal supports **nuclear weapons free zones**, keeping the outer space free of weapons, and controlling **small arms and light weapons** from the reach of illicit hands. The Arms Trade Treaty is a landmark achievement of this year.

Nepal unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations perpetrated anywhere in the world under any pretext. Our hearts go to the victims of terrorism most recently in Kenya and Pakistan, which only strengthens our resolve to fight the menace. We urge for an early conclusion of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism to fight this heinous crime against humanity.

Mr. President,

As a country emerging from conflict, Nepal underscores the importance of addressing issues of exclusion, discrimination, inequity, corruption, and violation of human rights, and also supports strengthening of the rule of law at national as well as international levels.

Nepal is concerned with the long drawn-out peace process in the **Middle East**. Our commitments are overdue for a comprehensive, lasting and judicious solution to this problem and support the legitimate rights of the Palestine people for an independent and sovereign Palestine State based on UN resolutions and to enable Israel and Palestine to live as neighbours within secure and recognized international boundaries.

The situation in **Syria** is a serious concern for us all due mainly to the violent conflict and subsequent large-scale humanitarian tragedy. We believe the international community should facilitate in easing of tensions and confrontation through diplomacy and dialogue towards peaceful and durable political solution. We condemn the recent use of chemical weapons in Syria and call for total destruction of the chemical weapons stockpile in all parts of the world.

I reiterate my country's principled position that the protracted embargo on **Cuba** is unjustified and needs to be ended immediately and unconditionally. Nepal supports early and peaceful unification of **Korean Peninsula** through dialogue and negotiations based on the will of the Korean people.

Mr. President,

Needless to say, making **women** partners in all efforts for peace, security and development at all levels, treating them equally without discrimination, and ensuring protection of basic rights to unleash their creative potentials have positive implications in the advancement of society as a whole. Moreover, their mainstreaming and empowerment through access to power and productive resources directly contributes to development holistically. In Nepal, the constitutional, legislative and institutional provisions ensure equal rights to women and their meaningful participation and contribution in society focusing on capacity building, institutional strengthening, legal protection, empowerment and gender mainstreaming.

We are committed to our national, regional and international commitments and obligations to human rights despite our protracted political transition, low level of economic growth and capacity constraints. Peace, democracy, human rights and development reinforce each other and impinge upon people's uninterrupted participation in governance and inclusive development process. The National Human Rights Commission and other several human rights institutions seek to safeguard human rights of our people. We are strengthening their institutional capacity to deliver on their constitutional and statutory responsibilities including in ensuring the rights of women, children and persons with disabilities. The current national plan, policies, and programs of the government are geared towards empowerment of all the people, regardless of class, creed, gender and ethnicity, and embarking on the path of socio-economic development that is inclusive, fair, equitable and just for all in line with the country's national and international commitments.

Mr. President,

Nepal is a founding member of SAARC and also a member of BIMSTEC, through which we are actively involved to forge synergy of collective efforts in several areas of regional cooperation, including poverty reduction, trade expansion, investment promotion, connectivity improvement and socio-economic advancement. Nepal is constructively engaged with arrangements like SAARC and BIMSTEC for peace and prosperity at the regional level and with the UN at the global level.

My delegation looks up to the United Nations as a repository of our hopes and true upholder of the universal values of peace, justice, equality, freedom and human dignity. With the mandate and structures founded nearly seven decades ago, reforms of the United Nations have been a continuous process to meet the growing needs of the changing time. There are growing concerns that the UN bodies and Bretton Woods Institutions be made more democratic, accountable, financially stable, and responsive to all as their decisions pervade through the social, economic and financial architectures of nation states. Nepal supports timely reengineering of these institutions for ensuring representation of developing countries in their decision-making.

Nepal holds the view that the reform at the Security Council should reflect changes in contemporary political and economic realities. It should be more representative in composition, transparent in functioning, democratic in character, balanced between the North and South and, above all, be capable of taking prompt action when peace is threatened.

For over six decades now, Nepal has been consistently contributing to the work of the UN, particularly through peacekeeping missions around the world including in most challenging situations. More than 100,000 peacekeepers have served so far with distinct professionalism and 63 soldiers have laid down their precious lives in the line of duty.

Mr. President,

My country Nepal stands at a crucial phase to take the peace process to a logical conclusion and institutionalize gains in democratic rights of the people, which came through various continuous movements and struggles carried out over decades in the past. The country-driven and owned peace process got the support of the United Nations and the international community for which we express our deep appreciation. Looking at the development, the first Constituent Assembly elected through the democratic process in 2008 got expired without completing its mandate of making an inclusive constitution, in May 2012. In the aftermath of the Constituent Assembly dissolution, attempts to form a consensus government led by leaders of political parties could not materialize in absence of general consensus even after a series of attempts through dialogues and negotiations. The country started to slide into political uncertainty in absence of surety of an election and more complications looked imminent to ensue. To arrest this situation, major political parties were guided by collective wisdom to work out an alternative outlet that resulted in the formation of an apolitical and neutral government under the leadership of the Chief Justice for holding free, fair and credible elections to a fresh Constituent Assembly. In view of demand of the situation to form a Constituent Assembly that functions as a pivotal institution for the balance of power, I had to accept the responsibility in larger interest of the nation and people, also as a responsible citizen.

We have made necessary preparations to hold the elections on 19 November this year. We have been trying our best to listen to the dissenting parties and bring them on board for the election through the political process. There is no alternative to elections to revitalize the democratic process and ensure political stability. The election will provide mandate of the people for writing a constitution, advance civil and political rights, ensure people's sovereignty in decision-making in state affairs and institutionalize multi-party democracy, federalism and republicanism. It will be instrumental in completing the remaining task of the peace process. Settlement of political issues through democratic process will ensure political stability and eventually it will open up prospect for broad-based economic development which is long-aspired by the people. I express sincere thanks to the international community for the moral and material support made available for the elections and would like to convey that such gesture of goodwill bears meaning to us.

It is my hope and belief that, with the continuing understanding, support and assistance from all friends of Nepal, we will be able to go beyond the protracted political transition and focus on the consolidation of political accomplishments made so far, further democratization of the country, and economic development so we could graduate from the LDC status by 2022. We are fully confident that democracy provides leverage for bridging differences, and promoting peace, tranquility and prosperity.

Thank you !