

*Check against delivery*

**STATEMENT**

**by**

**Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Mr. Akil AKILOV,**

**at**

**the General Debates of the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly**

*(September 27, 2013, New York)*

**Distinguished Chairman,**

**Distinguished Secretary-General,**

**Distinguished Heads of Delegations and Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to join the cordial congratulations addressed to you, Mr John W. Ashe, on the occasion of your election as the President of the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly. I am convinced that your extensive professional experience will contribute to efficient and successful work of this UNGA session. I would also like to extend appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Vuk Jeremic, for the efforts he undertook as the President of the previous session of the UN General Assembly.

We fully share the commitment of this UNGA session to contribute to the development of a post 2015 global development agenda, to enhance the already achieved progress in the full implementation of the decisions of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (*Rio+20*).

It is known, that during the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the UNGA there were approved the modalities of the High-level Political forum on sustainable development, the first meeting of which took place the other day here in New York. We expect this Forum, which replaced the Commission on Sustainable Development, to become a universal and effective platform for a regular dialogue and review of the achievements, as well as for development and coordination of the program of actions aimed at promotion of sustainable development.

Further progress in attaining sustainable development in many respects depends on adequate and timely financing of the scheduled programs and projects. In this regard, the activities of the Intergovernmental Committee of experts on financing of sustainable development, which has the mandate to develop recommendations on effective strategy of financing of sustainable development, are becoming of key importance.

We support the process of advancing the idea of the need to develop a sustainable development goal on water resources. We believe that in this case the following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Ensuring a universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation;
- Introduction of integrated management of water resources at the national and regional levels;
- Increase in efficiency of water use and secondary use of water;
- Adequate financing and investments in water-economy facilities and infrastructure, transfer and introduction of advanced technologies;
- Formation of mutually accepted mechanisms on gathering and dissemination of information and data.

As it was stated in the Outcome Document of “Rio+20”, *“water is at the core of sustainable development as it is closely linked to a number of key global challenges”*.

The UNGA water-related resolutions initiated by Tajikistan and co-sponsored by UN member states made an invaluable contribution to the realization of the key role of water resources in the achievement of sustainable development. This year marked the tenth anniversary of our first global project, the International Year of Freshwater, 2003. Another important decision made by the GA was declaring 2005-2015 as the International Decade of Action “Water for Life”.

In 2010 Tajikistan initiated the GA resolution on declaring the year 2013 as the International Year of Water Cooperation. When advancing this resolution, in cooperation with other countries, we operated on the assumption that the events of this International Year will contribute to strengthening of a dialogue and mutual understanding, enhancing of cooperation and partnership on the basis of multilevel and comprehensive approaches towards the solution of water problems. And most importantly, we expect the International Year of Water Cooperation to become an important platform for consolidation of efforts and changing for the better our attitude towards water resources. Today it is still early to draw any conclusions on the outcome of the Year. However, I would like to note that the International Year of Water Cooperation provided a unique opportunity to promote the dialogue on the search for and establishment of just, mutually advantageous and effective water cooperation. Particularly this idea was in the focus of the statements and reports of the participants to the High-level International Conference on Water Cooperation organized by the Government of Tajikistan, in cooperation with the UN, on August 20-21, 2013 in Dushanbe. I would like to take this opportunity to extend appreciation to the distinguished GA President and UN Secretary-General, and all our partners - member states,

international and regional organizations - for active participation in the work of this successful Conference. Based on the outcome of the Conference the Dushanbe Declaration of the High level international conference and Dushanbe Framework for action on water cooperation were issued and circulated among member states as documents of the UNGA.

In his statement at the Opening ceremony of the Dushanbe Conference the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon put forward the initiative to develop a post 2015 global water vision, which could serve as "*the road map*" for the implementation of the water-related sustainable development goals. In our opinion, global water vision that consolidates the renewed view and attitude towards water resources of the planet could also contribute to enhancement of efforts at the implementation of the post 2015 development agenda. In this regard, I would kindly request the distinguished delegates to render support to our initiative.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is common knowledge that water resources are central to the achievement of the development goals laid down in the Millennium Declaration. Our efforts at poverty eradication directly depend on rational management of water resources. The undertaken efforts have not yet produced the large scale effect that we expected at the dawn of the Millennium. However, the progress is obvious. As it was stated in the MDGs Report of 2013 , over the two recent decades more than two billion and one hundred million people got access to improved drinking water supply, and one billion nine hundred people improved their sanitation conditions. Despite this, 768 million people are still using water from unsafe water sources, and about 2.5 billion people do not have access to basic sanitation. Besides, the level of progress differs not only in the regions and countries, but also in rural and urban areas within the same countries.

The recent special GA event that took place in New York provided another opportunity for a real assessment of progress and identification of the ways of accelerating achievement of maximum success, within the framework of the implementation of the MDGs. It is particularly important under the circumstances when the financial-and-economic, food and energy crises and climate change undermine the current still unsustainable and uneven progress in the MDGs implementation.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The experience shows that it is impossible to achieve the development goals without ensuring a reliable and universal access to energy. The International Decade of Sustainable Energy, 2014-2024 provides a unique opportunity for practical implementation of this task. We believe that along ensuring a reliable and sustainable access to energy, it is essential to encourage and promote in every possible way the increase in share of renewable energy, transfer of advanced technologies, increase in efficiency of energy supply and energy saving.

In the conditions of economic and population growth and lack of large oil and gas deposits Tajikistan, which has huge hydropower potential, undertakes every effort at a comprehensive development of its power engineering, on which primarily the population wellbeing depends.

The Government of the country undertakes extra efforts at using, to the full extent, its potential for addressing the socio-economic issues. On March 2, 2013 Tajikistan successfully completed the negotiation process and joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) as the 159<sup>th</sup> member of this multilateral system of world trade regulation. We are interested in advancing the trade interests of the developing countries, including those of the landlocked countries. In this context, on September 17-16, 2013 in the city of Dushanbe there were held the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Intergovernmental commission on the international transportation corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia and the High-level International Conference on development of transit potential of Central Asia for the period till 2023. These events made an additional contribution to the process of preparation for the ten years' comprehensive review of the implementation of the Alma-Ata plan of action.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Effective regional cooperation can render considerable support to the formation of a new global partnership for achieving sustainable development. In our region development of a multidimensional cooperation in many respects depends on strengthening of peace and stability in Afghanistan. We support the efforts undertaken by the Government of Afghanistan and international community at addressing the challenges of the transition period, reconciliation and post conflict rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

We believe that socio-economic development is the key to achieving lasting peace in Afghanistan. International aid to Afghanistan should be aimed, above all, at a full economic recovery, further strengthening of the social sphere and generating new jobs. One should consider the borders of the counties neighbouring Afghanistan as the front line of combating drug trafficking and, in this regard, should enhance efforts at their logistic strengthening, and speedy creation of modern and competent Afghan border police.

Tajikistan deems that there is an urgent need to fully include Afghanistan in the multidimensional regional cooperation processes. The involvement of the neighbouring countries in the development of Afghanistan and due consideration to the regional context in the post-conflict rehabilitation of this country will guarantee a success of the ongoing efforts undertaken by the world community.

It is obvious that illicit drug trafficking has become one of the major sources of financing of international terrorism. The urgency and magnitude of the problems associated with drugs and illicit drug trafficking is a clear indication of a global danger threatening international stability and security as a whole. The international community should unite the efforts at reducing supply and demand for drugs and at integrating national and regional efforts into the international drug

control strategy. During the period of its membership in the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (2014-2017) Tajikistan is going to strengthen and expand interaction with other member states, international and regional organizations in practical implementation of international conventions on narcotic drugs, the Political declaration and the Plan of action on streamlining international cooperation with a view to develop a comprehensive and balanced strategy to address the global narcotics challenge.

Combating terrorism is one of the long-term and complicated tasks that requires strengthening of joint struggle by means of application of the entire spectrum of political, economic and financial measures. We consider it important to expedite coordination and adoption of a comprehensive antiterrorist convention. The regional and subregional organizations capable of rendering support to the global system of combating international terrorism are called upon to play an important role in combating terrorism and extremism.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In recent years Tajikistan has intensified its interaction with the UN law-enforcement mechanisms, including special procedures on human rights. The country's main priorities in this field are strengthening of international mechanisms for protection of human rights, *bona fide* implementation of the undertaken commitments and promotion of multilateral cooperation in the field of human rights protection. We regard the activities of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) as an important forum for a constructive dialogue and cooperation in the field of human rights.

Guided by the desire to make a contribution to the open and fair dialogue in the field of human rights, Tajikistan, for the first time, has decided to nominate its candidature to the UN Human Rights Committee for the period 2015-2017.

We hope that the Tajikistan candidature to UNHRC for 2015-2017 will be supported at the election to be held during the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the UNGA in the fall of 2014.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the entire range of long-term goals requires a clear and sound review of the actions *on route* to transition towards sustainable development. We are convinced that the United Nations as the unique and universal mechanism for multilateral cooperation must remain a center for coordination of collective efforts at ensuring peace, security, development and human rights. Meanwhile, the consolidating role of the UN itself must be strengthened through its comprehensive reform and strengthening of its ability to rapidly and adequately respond to the problems, effectively meet numerous global challenges and counteract threats.

**Thank you for attention.**