

EGYPT



مصر

The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

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Statement of
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President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Before the 69th session of
The General Assembly of
The United Nations

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Mr. President,

At the outset, it gives me pleasure to congratulate you, and your friendly country, for assuming the Presidency of the General Assembly at its 69th Session. We are confident that you will lead its work wisely, and lend you our support as you undertake your duties.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to your predecessor for his untiring efforts as President of the previous session. I also reiterate our support to the Secretary General as he strives to realize the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I stand before you today as one of the sons of Egypt, the cradle of human civilization. From this podium, I first salute the great people of Egypt, that made history twice over the past few years. First, when they revolted against corruption and despotism, and claimed their right to freedom, dignity and social justice. Then when they held on to their identity, and enthused by patriotism, they rose up against exclusion, refusing to succumb to the tyranny of a faction who, in the name of religion, put its narrow interests before the interests of the people.

These were simply snapshots of the defining moments Egypt recently witnessed. They constitute only milestones of a longer journey, which Egyptians, fueled by their dreams and aspirations, have embarked on, towards a better day and a more prosperous future.

The world is starting to grasp the reality of what happened in Egypt, and to understand the circumstances that drove Egyptians to intuitively take to the streets to rebel against the forces of extremism and darkness, which once in power, undermined the foundations of the democratic process and national institutions, and sought to impose a state of polarization to break the unity of the people.

The upsurge in extremism and violence perpetrated in the name of religion that the region is currently witnessing is an evidence of the true objectives of these groups that exploit religion. We have warned against them over and over again. They have transformed the values of justice, compassion and mercy treasured by Judaism, Christianity and Islam, into grim sectarianism and destructive civil and regional wars which continue to claim the lives of innocent people of different religions.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Egyptian people realize, and I do too given the responsibilities that I shoulder since my election as President, that achieving our goals began by building a civil democratic state, in light of the principles we sought, through adhering to the road map for the future agreed upon by the Egyptian national powers, which will be completed with the holding of parliamentary elections, following the presidential election and the constitutional referendum during which Egyptians expressed their free will.

Our aim is to build a “New Egypt”... A state that respects the rights and freedoms, honors its duties, and ensures the co-existence of its citizens without exclusion or discrimination. A state that respects and enforces the rule of law, guarantees freedom of opinion for all and ensures freedom of belief and worship to its people. A state that is determined to achieve growth, prosperity, and a promising future that meets the aspirations of its people.

To attain that, Egypt began implementing an ambitious comprehensive program to spur development until 2030, with the aim of laying the foundations of a free market economy that is capable of attracting investments in a secure and stable environment. The “New Suez Canal Project”, the gift of Egyptians to the world, is a proof of the seriousness of our intent, and of the resolve of the “New Egypt” to forge a better tomorrow for its children and youth. This is why I invite you to participate in the economic conference that will be held in Egypt next February, to achieve development and build the future, not only for Egypt, but for the whole region.

These steps briefly reflect the gist of the social contract embraced by the Egyptians in their new Constitution, to build a better today and a brighter tomorrow, and to establish a state that is armed with strong institutions and governed by the rule of law. A state that respects the judiciary, ensures its independence, and applies the principle of separation of powers. A state that is not held back by a terrorism that thinks that it can conquer and repress our nation.

Egypt has suffered from the scourge of this terrorism since the nineteen twenties, when it concealed its poisonous viewpoints behind religion to reach power and establish the Caliphate State, relying on armed violence and terror to achieve its objectives, and generating in the process a handful of extremists that commit atrocities in the name of religion. Here I stress that we should not allow them to abuse Islam and offend the one and a half billion Muslims that cherish its noble values. Religion, by virtue of its holiness and sanctity, cannot be put to the test by humans to judge whether it has succeeded or failed.

Terrorism is a plague that does not differentiate in its spread between developing and developed societies. Terrorists come from differing societies. They are not bound together by any true religious faith. That is why it is imperative that we all intensify our cooperation and coordination efforts to end the support provided to these terrorist organizations that enables them to continue perpetrating crimes, pursuant to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in fulfilment of its objectives.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The problems that our region faces emanating from the space provided to the local and regional forces of extremism, as well as the state of polarization that often turns into division and strife, has become a serious danger that threatens the very existence of the state and dispels its identity. This has produced a fertile ground for terrorism and its organizations to grow and gain influence.

In this sense, the crises facing some countries of the region could be resolved through the following two-pronged approach aiming at building the nation-state:

- 1- The application of the principles of equality of all citizens, and respect for the rule of law, based on a social contract and a national consensus, whilst ensuring the enjoyment by all of all rights, especially the right to development. This will safeguard societies from exploitation and prevent them from succumbing to extremism.
- 2- A decisive confrontation with the forces of extremism and terrorism, as well as with any attempt to impose opinions by intimidation and violence, or to force exclusion through rejection in all its forms.

Egypt, in agreement with Libya's neighboring countries, has put forward an initiative that sets specific steps and a clear horizon to end the plight of this brotherly country. We can build on this initiative to reach a comprehensive political solution that strengthens the elected Libyan institutions, and ensures that the bloodshed is put to an end and that the territorial integrity of Libya is preserved. To succeed, we must effectively stop the smuggling of arms into Libya, and deal relentlessly with the extremist movements that resort to weapons and violence, and that does not recognize the democratic process.

Despite the heartrending humanitarian situation in brotherly Syria and the destruction and loss of innocent lives resulting from the crisis there, I am confident that it is possible to put into place a political framework that ensures that the aspirations of the Syrian people are met, without compromising with terrorism and without replicating the circumstances which the Syrians initially rebelled against. I emphasize Egypt's support to the aspirations of the Syrian people to a safe life that ensures the stability of Syria, preserves its territorial integrity, as well as the unity of its people.

The formation of a new government approved by the Parliament in the brotherly country of Iraq is a significant development that restores hope in the possibility of an improvement in the situation there, and in the success of the internal and external attempts to achieve stability, restore the areas that fell under the control of the terrorist organization “ISIS”, maintain the territorial integrity of Iraq, end the bloodshed, and realize the aspirations and hopes of the Iraqis, as well as their efforts to bring back security and stability in their country.

Despite the multitude of crises threatening our region, some of which I alluded to, the Palestinian issue remains a top priority for Egypt. Palestinians still aspire to establish their independent state on the occupied territories in 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of the principles upon which the peace process was established since the nineteen seventies following an Egyptian initiative. These principles are not up for negotiation, otherwise the basis of a comprehensive peace in the region would erode, and the values of justice and humanity would vanish. The continued deprivation of the Palestinian people of their rights is undoubtedly exploited by some to inflame other crises, achieve hidden goals, fragment Arab unity, and impose control on Palestinians under the guise of realizing their aspirations.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen

All of the above puts a special responsibility on Egypt, and on its strong state which confronted terrorism and extremism in the nineteen nineties. I am confident that Egypt will succeed in uprooting terrorism by virtue of its national identity. Egypt will always be a beacon of civilization supporting cohesion of the region, and Egyptians will never hesitate in assuming their role to that effect. Egypt considers Arab National Security an integral part of its own national security, on the basis of our common heritage and destiny, and our longing for the stability of a region crucial to the world.

Egypt’s vision of international relations is founded on the respect of the principles of international law, treaties and conventions, which are based on mutual respect, as well as mutual interests and benefits. As you know, Egypt is a founding member of the United Nations, and has ever since strongly contributed to the realization of its goals, especially in the areas of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development. From this standpoint, Egypt’s aspiration to the non-permanent membership of the Security Council in the years 2016-2017 stems from its desire to make use of its membership to achieve the purposes of the Organization, and protect the interests of developing countries, especially in Africa, as well as to accelerate the reform of the United Nations System, as part of a broader vision based on the principle of equality of all nations. I therefore invite Member States to support Egypt’s candidature to the Security Council.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I have conveyed to you in all humility the message of the Egyptian people, their women before their men, and their youth before their elderly. This is a message of hope, of will, and of determination to work. A message of openness to cooperate with all to overcome all obstacles and difficulties. Let me assure you that the Egyptian people after their two revolutions have become the sole source of our internal and external policies in pursuit of stability and development.

Egypt today has regained its self-confidence. Egypt is upholding the principles of law and freedom. Egypt with its Arab identity and African roots is the cradle of Mediterranean civilization, and the beacon of moderate Islam. An Egypt that aspires to resolve regional disputes, and uphold the principles of justice and humanity in today's world. I am confident that the capacity of Egyptians to give is infinite... We have inherited this gift from our ancestors; it shall remain ever generous, God willing.

Long live Egypt...

Long live the peace loving peoples of the world...

Long live the principles of humanity and the values of tolerance and coexistence...

Peace be upon you and God's mercy and blessings.
