



General Assembly

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Official Records

General Assembly

Fifty-ninth session
5th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 22 September 2004, 10 a.m.
New York

President : Mr. Ping

(Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Address by Mr. Sulejman Tihić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Sulejman Tihić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Sulejman Tihić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Tihić (*spoke in Bosnian; English text provided by the delegation*): ...

...

I think that the Iraqi crisis needs to be resolved simultaneously with the Palestinian issue. We therefore support the initiative of the Quartet and the [road map](#) as a basis for setting up a sincere dialogue between the two States, with United States mediation. We also strongly condemn all terrorist acts, as well as execution without trial of Palestinian religious leaders. We strongly condemn the Israeli side's construction of the protection wall.

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Address by Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Namibia.

Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Nujoma: ...

...

The United Nations Settlement Plan for Western Sahara must be implemented immediately. Likewise, the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people must be realized. We, the international community, owe it to them.

...

Address by Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of South Africa.

Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President Mbeki: ...

...

Many of those who have already addressed the Assembly have correctly drawn our attention to many instances of terrorism and war, to which we are all opposed. They have spoken of the bombings of the United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and of the African and American lives those claimed; of the heinous 11 September outrage in this city; and of the acts of terrorism in Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Spain, Israel, Catumba in Burundi, Beslan in the Russian Federation, and elsewhere.

They have correctly drawn our attention to the violent conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, the Sudan, Palestine, Israel, Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and elsewhere, and to other unsolved problems, such as self-determination for the people of Western Sahara, that cry out for a

solution.

...

Address by Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti

The Acting President : The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Djibouti.

Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President : On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Guelleh (*spoke in French*) :...

...

Until now, innumerable resolutions, commitments, initiatives and peace processes to resolve the long-festering Middle East conflict remain at best rhetorical. A clear-cut vision of the two-State solution — a secure Israel side by side with a viable Palestinian State — rings hollow in the wake of a large expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories of the West Bank, with the building of thousands of houses on land confiscated from Palestinian families. All this sounds familiar. Over the last three-and-a-half decades, we have witnessed the blatant confiscation of Palestinian land, farmlands and water resources. The daily oppression and repression of Palestinian victims is beyond comprehension. Nevertheless, the Palestinians continue to struggle against all odds to maintain some semblance of civil order.

Making an already untenable and explosive situation even worse, Israel, in defiance of international law and public opinion, has embarked on building a separation wall, which is penetrating and dividing Palestinian territory in two, well beyond Israel's 1967 borders, thus creating facts on the ground. And, as we all know by now, Israel's proposed tactical withdrawal from Gaza is not a prelude to Palestinian statehood. All these violent and deliberate actions have made a mockery of the road map, and thus, r Making an already untenable and explosive situation even worse, Israel, in defiance of international law and public opinion, has embarked on building a separation wall, which is penetrating and dividing Palestinian territory in two, well beyond Israel's 1967 borders, thus creating facts on the ground. And, as we all know by now, Israel's proposed tactical withdrawal from Gaza is not a prelude to Palestinian statehood. All these violent and deliberate actions have made a mockery of the road map, and thus, rendered it worthless; this is the same fate that met the Oslo Accords.

Abandoned by the international community, the Palestinians are struck with indefinite deprivation, a sense of hopelessness and statelessness. That being the case, this Assembly has perhaps the sad duty to pronounce itself incapable of constraining Israel, a Member State of this Organization, rather than continuing to give false hope to a people that has already lost everything.

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Address by General Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

The President (*spoke in French*) : The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

General Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in French*) : On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency General Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Musharraf : ...

...

The tragedy of Palestine is an open wound inflicted on the psyche of every Muslim. It generates anger and resentment across the Islamic world. Continued Israeli violence and the Israelis' erection of the illegal separation wall, usurping more Palestinian land, as well as suicide attacks by misguided Palestinians, are frustrating the prospects of peace and prolonging the agony of the Palestinian people. While Pakistan stands for peace, recognizing the right of Israel to exist as also the right of the Palestinians to have their own homeland, we can never accept the usurpation of additional Palestinian land. Israel has no right to erect its separation wall beyond its 1967 boundaries. Pakistan calls on Israel to withdraw the wall from all occupied Palestinian lands, taking it back to the pre-1967 boundaries. We also call on Israel to stop the daily atrocities against Palestinians. Pakistan also appeals to President Yasser Arafat to use his influence to reciprocally halt the intifada and give peace a chance.

A major responsibility rests with the Quartet, and in particular with the world's greatest Power, the United States, to secure a fair and peaceful solution to the problem, realizing the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace, harmony and security. The United States can and must play the role of a just broker of peace. Peace must succeed in the Middle East; failure is no longer an option.

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Address by Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*) : The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Latvia.

Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*) : On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Her Excellency Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

President Vike-Freiberga : ...

...

Frequently, countries facing terrorist attacks have been using vastly superior military capabilities to strike hard at real or perceived terrorist targets. Too often, however, those strikes have had an undesirable side effect of their own: the further wounding and killing of civilians and the additional destruction of property. Such strikes have done nothing to diminish the deep-seated feelings of resentment of disaffected populations. The events of the past few years, and indeed of the past few decades, point to the stark and sobering reality that the military option alone has not been effective in rooting out terrorism and that terrorism has not been an effective means for achieving political aspirations and goals.

Such never-ending cycles of killing and mounting mutual hostility will cease once and for all only when the parties involved forsake the use of violence. In the Middle East, Latvia views the road map for peace as the only feasible means of obtaining a cessation of hostilities between Israelis and Palestinians. My country encourages the interested parties to do their utmost to de-escalate tensions and resume the peace process.

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Address by Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*) : The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe .

Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe , was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*) : On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe , and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President Mugabe : ...

...

Zimbabwe remains deeply concerned about the situation in the Middle East. We continue to be revolted by a situation where the collective decisions and authority of the United Nations are disregarded with impunity on account of big-brother support. We demand an immediate lifting of all restrictions illegally imposed on the Palestinian people, which have seen President Yasser Arafat remain a virtual prisoner of foreign occupation. We welcome the recent opinion given by the International Court of Justice that found the construction of the Israeli wall to be in contravention of international law, and the subsequent General Assembly resolution that demanded an immediate halt to that monstrosity.

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The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*) : I now call on His Excellency Mr. Issam Fares, Deputy Prime Minister of Lebanon.

Mr. Fares (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*) : ...

...

In past years, we in Lebanon used to come to this forum seeking United Nations help. The United Nations has always come to our support, adopting resolutions affirming Lebanon's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. We must express our gratitude to the United Nations for dispatching the United Nations

Interim Force in Lebanon, stationed on our frontiers with Israel, and for the continuing and effective aid we get from the Organization's specialized agencies.

Today, we come to this forum with a different objective. Our country is in good shape. It has regained its position in the region. We have moved from destruction to construction, from rule by the militias to the rule of law, from anarchy to stability and security, and from division to unity. In the 1970s and 1980s, "Lebanonization" became a bad word. It stood for anarchy and infighting. Now, however, "Lebanonization" has regained its true, original meaning as a term standing for democracy, freedom, pluralism and recognition of the other.

Early this month, the Security Council adopted its [resolution 1559 \(2004\)](#), concerning Lebanon. The resolution has two dimensions, one regional, the other internal. As for the regional dimension, the resolution calls for the withdrawal of all foreign forces still in Lebanon. There are Israeli forces occupying part of Lebanon: the Sheba'a farms and the surrounding area. Together with the rest of the Assembly, we call for the immediate withdrawal of those forces. From this rostrum, we also call upon Israel to halt its daily violations of our airspace.

There are also Syrian forces in Lebanon. Those forces are on our territory at the request of the Lebanese Government and in accordance with agreements signed by the two parties. Lebanon will accept the presence of those troops as long as the security situation in the region merits it. It is Lebanon's policy that not a single non-Lebanese soldier should remain on its soil. Our disagreement with the United Nations concerning the withdrawal of Syrian forces lies in the timing of the withdrawal; it is not a disagreement on the principle of withdrawal. The timing is under continuous discussion between the Lebanese and Syrian Governments; it will depend on their assessment of the security situation in the region. It is also the policy of Lebanon to support the national resistance movement, which played an important role in forcing Israel to withdraw from southern Lebanon.

As for the Council's resolution's internal dimension — As for the Council's resolution's internal dimension — relating to the amendment of our Constitution — we consider it an unacceptable intervention in our internal affairs. Our Constitution, which was promulgated in 1926, may be the oldest democratic constitution in the entire Middle East. Successive Lebanese Parliaments have amended it many times, always in accordance with its own amendment mechanisms and by absolute majorities.

Lebanon is a civilized democratic country. It abides by international law and reveres the moral principles and values on which it is based. My country was a founding Member of the United Nations in 1945. It played a leading role in the formulation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. And, from this rostrum, Lebanon has exposed and opposed all destructive and disruptive ideologies and movements that we felt impeded the course of civilization and the future of humanity.

Today, we stand together with the United Nations in opposing international terrorism in all its forms. Lebanon has witnessed the horrors of terrorism on its soil; it has witnessed innocent people being kidnapped, tortured and killed. It knows what terrorism is all about, and, as a result of first-hand knowledge, it condemns it in the strongest terms. We also condemn those who wilfully confuse terrorism with the struggle for national liberation and independence. There are those who exploit the universal revulsion against terrorism to smear national liberation movements by branding them as terrorist. National liberation is a right and an honour; terrorism is a crime and cowardice.

Lebanon has recovered its stability and freedom. We are not here to ask anything specific for ourselves. We do, however, ask that the United Nations devote more attention to our region. The region is in turmoil, and it looks to the United Nations to help establish peace. The Organization has been granted legitimacy by all nations in its quest to ensure peace and stability.

We ask the following of the United Nations. First, the Organization should increase its efforts to solve the Middle East problem. It should do so by implementing its resolutions concerning Israel's withdrawal from the territories it occupied in 1967, by giving the Palestinians an independent sovereign State and by ensuring the return of Palestinian refugees to their homeland. The more the Middle East conflict is allowed to fester, the more difficult it will be to resolve and the more danger and war there will be in the region.

Secondly, the United Nations should assume greater responsibility in resolving the violent conflict in Iraq and in restoring peace, stability and unity to the Iraqis. The Iraqis have suffered greatly, and they deserve strong and continuing support from the United Nations so that they can build a free, just and democratic order.

Thirdly, the Organization should help the Middle East region to achieve a new stable order based on just and equitable solutions and on the right to self-determination, since that region is the birthplace of the three monotheistic religions. The United Nations should also put an end to the arms race and to the waste of capabilities and rid the region of weapons of mass destruction.

Fourthly, the United Nations should encourage the establishment of civil organizations as a necessary first step in the process of reform and democratization. It is difficult to build an accountable democratic system without diverse and pluralistic civil institutions. Democracy is based on political parties, trade unions, civil institutions, humanitarian organizations and associations of all kinds, which are the foundations of reform and democracy.

Lebanon has a clear vision about the future of the region and of its civilization. It wants to play a decisive role in that future, as it did in forging an Eastern civilization in the region, based on the most profound principles of Christianity and Islam.

Lebanon is an international country, bigger than its size and population, due to its emigrants, who inhabit every nook and cranny of the world. Wherever they may be, the Lebanese are emissaries of innovation and production. Some countries may take pride in exporting weapons and in deploying armies, but Lebanon, since the dawn of history, has prided itself on exporting its precious young people, who, in all continents, assume the highest posts in universities, research centres, industries and businesses.

Lebanon supports the United Nations because of its universal views on humanity and its future. In the past, my country may have suffered precisely because of its universalism, its openness and its freedom. Because Lebanon has given much, Lebanon deserves much.

Finally, I wish the General Assembly and its Main Committees every success in addressing the many important items on the agenda. Lebanon will participate actively in all these proceedings, in any way that will help to attain the objectives of the United Nations and advance the universal cause of freedom and peace.

The meeting rose at 2.05 p.m.