

Address by H.E. General Pervez Musharraf President of Pakistan at the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly, New York.

Mr. President,

It is with great pleasure that I extend to you our warmest felicitations on your election. I also congratulate your predecessor, H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan, for his effective leadership during the last Session of the General Assembly.

2. We support Secretary-General Kofi Annan's efforts to infuse a new sense of mission in the United Nations and maintain the centrality of its role in the promotion of global peace and security. We pay tribute to the memory of Mr. Sergio de Mello and the other UN officials who sacrificed their lives in the service of peace.

Mr. President,

3. When the Berlin Wall collapsed, hopes revived for a new age of cooperation and peace, free of ideological confrontations. Sadly, these hopes were dashed:

- by the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, and then in Kosovo;
- by the failure to end the occupation of Palestine, leading to the revived Intifada against Israeli occupation;
- by the brutal suppression of the Kashmiris demand for self-determination and freedom from Indian occupation;
- by the unending war in Afghanistan and the international neglect which created a climate in which extremism and terrorism could breed;
- by the series of international financial crises and the rise of poverty as a consequence of unequal economic globalization.

4. The terrible terrorist atrocity of 9/11 jolted the foundations of the international system. The response has weakened Al-Qaeda. But, it has not eliminated its associates. Terrorists have struck repeatedly around the world – in Indonesia, Tunisia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Kenya – and in Pakistan.

5. The tragedy of 9/11 transformed security policies and changed geopolitical calculations. Pakistan took a strategic decision, based on the principles of humanity and our national interest, to support the war on terrorism. Our intentions should be in no doubt. Our actions speak louder than words. Our capabilities were limited but have been progressively improved. We are acting against Al-Qaeda and its associates effectively. We have also acted against other organizations or groups involved in any form of terrorism. Pakistan will remain in the forefront of the war on terrorism.

6. The war against terrorism must be fought comprehensively, on a global front, with vision and understanding. It should not erode the moral values of our societies. It must not be hijacked by those who seek to use it as an excuse to suppress other peoples. It must not be allowed to engender a clash of civilizations – a clash between Islam and the West.

7. It is unfortunate that great religions – which should be a source of hope, tolerance and peace – are seen as being pitted against each other. Many Muslims believe their eternal Faith is being demonized. They see Muslim peoples being cruelly suppressed for demanding freedom and equality or targeted for discrimination and worse.

8. On the other hand, the West perceives the Islamic world as volatile and hostile, bent upon striking at Western values. Muslims are often seen as fanatics, extremists and terrorists.

9. In this volatile milieu, the recent war in Iraq has evoked negative reactions in most Arab and Islamic countries.

10. This moment in history calls for reflection, introspection and action. The thesis of a clash of civilizations is a travesty. We must bridge the gulf of misunderstanding between Islam and the West. We must be the catalysts of change, not the prophets of doom.

11. Islam is a faith of peace, harmony and justice. Islam is democracy in action. It upholds human rights, social equality, non-discrimination, freedom of speech. The protection of minorities is an article of faith in Islam. It does not discriminate on the basis of color, caste, creed or religion. Our Faith is dynamic, promoting constant renewal and adaptation, through the process of Ijtihad (or interpretation through consultations), Islam's vision is not trapped in any one period of history; it is modern and futuristic. Islam must not be confused with the narrow vision of a few extremists.

Mr. President,

12. I believe the way forward is to adopt a two-pronged strategy – a double pincer – to build harmony, promote moderation, oppose extremism, and ensure justice. I call this strategy: **“Enlightened Moderation”**.

13. On the one hand, Muslim nations must assume their responsibility for internal reform and renewal. They are at the cross roads. They must eschew extremism and confrontation. They must embrace the march of human civilization. They must address the deficits in their social and economic development. They must seek science and technology, higher education and human resource development.

14. The international community, specially the advanced countries of the West, must deliver the other pincer in the strategy of **“Enlightened Moderation”**. They can do so:

- by helping to resolve the political disputes and situations where Muslim peoples are being suppressed, such as in Palestine and Kashmir;
- by rejecting attempts to equate terrorism with Islam; and
- by assisting the Muslim World in poverty alleviation and socio-economic development.

15. The United Nations has a crucial role to play in the conception and execution of the strategy of **“Enlightened Moderation”**.

Mr. President,

16. In this context, it is clear that a consensus must be quickly evolved at the United Nations on ways to restore Iraq's stability, security and sovereignty. Iraq cannot be allowed to remain an open wound. This will impact on the region and could inject a new dimension to the campaign against terrorism and extremism. The consensus evolved must enable the Iraqi people, through an inclusive political process, to determine the sequence of steps leading to a fully representative Iraqi government and an end to occupation. The Iraqi people should assume control of their resources and political destiny as soon as possible. They must receive the full support of the international community, including Iraq's neighbours and the Arab and Islamic countries, in

building security and reconstructing their country. Pakistan would be prepared to help in a collective UN-sanctioned Arab and Islamic effort to help the Iraqi people, if they wish us to do so.

17. Endeavours to stabilize Iraq will be enhanced by progress in promoting peace with justice in the Middle East. Hopes for a just and comprehensive peace were aroused earlier this year by the "Quartet's Road-Map". These hopes have been progressively dimmed. But, failure is not an option. The fate of the Palestinian people is the principal factor in determining public and political perceptions in the entire Islamic world. It is only progress towards a just peace that can marginalize the extremists. Therefore, we must revive faithful implementation of the Road-Map and realize the vision of two States, Palestine and Israel, living side by side in peace within recognized boundaries.

Mr. President,

18. We must ensure the successful implementation of the Bonn process in Afghanistan. The international stabilization force (ISAF) should be expanded and enlarged to ensure security and control over all parts of Afghanistan by President Karzai's government. Pakistan will continue to contribute to interdicting and arresting Al-Qaeda and associated terrorists. We will further intensify our economic cooperation with Afghanistan. It is essential that Afghanistan's territory is not used by third countries for interference or terrorism against Afghanistan's neighbours.

Mr. President,

19. Jammu and Kashmir has been rightly described as the most dangerous dispute in the world. A just solution of this dispute holds the key to peace and security in South Asia.

20. I am glad that India has stepped back from its dangerous and failed experiment in "coercive diplomacy" last year. Despite some improvement in atmospherics, India continues to suppress the legitimate struggle of the Kashmiri people to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions. It refuses Pakistan's offers of dialogue to address and resolve the Kashmir dispute.

21. India cites "cross-border" terrorism to refuse a dialogue. It knows fully well that the Kashmiri struggle is indigenous. India seeks to exploit the international anti-terrorist sentiment after 9/11, to delegitimize the Kashmiri freedom struggle. On the contrary, it is India which violates international law by refusing to implement Security Council resolutions and perpetrating gross and consistent violations of human rights in Kashmir.

Mr. President,

22. Once again, from this august rostrum, I invite India to join Pakistan in a sustained dialogue to resolve the Kashmir dispute. I am convinced that, with goodwill, we can find a just solution which is acceptable to India, to Pakistan and, above all, to the Kashmiri people.

23. I also invite India, jointly with Pakistan, to observe a complete ceasefire along the Line of Control in Kashmir.

24. Pakistan would also be prepared to encourage a general cessation of violence within Kashmir, involving reciprocal obligations and restraints on Indian forces and the Kashmir freedom movement.

25. And, if India is genuinely concerned about cross-LOC infiltration, we ask that it agree to a viable mechanism to monitor this on both sides. The UNMOGIP could be enlarged for this purpose.

Mr. President,

26. Apart from addressing Kashmir, sustainable security in South Asia requires India and Pakistan to institute measures to ensure mutual nuclear restraint and a conventional arms balance. Unfortunately, India is embarked on a massive build-up of its conventional and non-conventional military capabilities – advanced offensive aircraft, ballistic and cruise missiles, ABM systems, nuclear submarines and an aircraft carrier. This will destabilize South Asia and erode strategic deterrence. Those powers which desire peace, stability and security in South Asia – and oppose the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction – must review their decisions to offer such major strategic weapons systems to India. They must contribute to maintaining arms restraint and a military balance in South Asia.

Mr. President,

27. The crises and conflicts of the last decade have enhanced, not diminished, the relevance of the United Nations. The United Nations remains the central forum for dialogue and diplomacy. It must be strengthened. The Security Council must be made more representative by increasing the number of non-permanent members. New permanent members will only expand inequality. States which occupy and suppress other peoples, and defy the resolutions of the Security Council, have no credentials to aspire for permanent membership.

Mr. President,

28. We are on the cusp of a new Millennium. It is a decisive moment in history. We must decide whether to flow with the currents that threaten confrontation and the collapse of our civilization, or muster the collective will to chart the course of history towards a peaceful and cooperative global society. The leaders assembled here bear an enormous responsibility:

- to rescue our world from war and violence, poverty and pestilence;
- to redress inequity and impoverishment which breeds despair and destruction;
- to collectively construct a new global architecture of peace and prosperity for all peoples and nations.

I thank you, Mr. President.