

Address by General Pervez Musharraf President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, at 59th Session of the United Nations General Assembly New York - 22 September 2004

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me to extend our warm felicitations on your election as the President of the General Assembly. We congratulate H.E. Mr. Julian Hunte for his successful stewardship of the 58th Session of the Assembly.

I also reaffirm our very deep appreciation for the wise leadership of the Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, and his services for the cause of peace and progress in the world.

Mr. President,

A profound transformation is underway in international relations. The dangerous balances of the Cold War have been replaced by the complex and equally dangerous realities of our world today. It is a world marked by intensifying globalization – of economies, production, trade and information, on one side, and terrorist violence, poverty and disease, on the other.

The growing asymmetries in power among States, discrimination in the dispensation of international justice, repression of peoples' legitimate aspirations, and growing socio-economic disparities, have precipitated "new threats" to international peace and security: The threat of terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and imploding States. The world today sees turmoil and upheaval everywhere – especially in the Third World and more specifically in the Muslim World. Too many fronts have been opened, too many battle lines drawn. The time for closing fronts has come. The world today is crying for peace, reconciliation and reform. Our objective today has to be harmony through reconciliation and accommodation, globally and regionally.

Mr. President,

Terrorism poses the most urgent threat to many countries, including the most powerful States. For many of us, the terrorist threat is close and personal. Terrorism threatens Pakistan's vital national interests and objectives. We have thus participated actively in the unprecedented global campaign against it. Pakistan has led the way in this campaign. Our counter-terrorist campaign is ongoing.

The global cooperation against Terrorism has been highly successful. Determined and collective action has contained and disrupted the violent agendas of the terrorists. We are winning the battle against terrorists. However, what we are doing is insufficient to win the ultimate war against them. The immediate anti-terrorist response has to be accompanied by a clear, long-term strategy striking at the root of the problem if we are to ensure final success against this scourge.

Mr. President,

I had proposed the two pronged strategy of Enlightened Moderation to overcome terrorism and prevent a clash of civilizations. The last Islamic Summit in Malaysia endorsed this plan which involves, on the one hand, internal socio-economic reform in the Muslim world and, on the other, active support from the major powers to ensure political justice and socio-economic revival for all Islamic peoples. While the Islamic World has taken its first step in the form of nominating a Commission of Eminent Persons to propose measures for a Renaissance in the Muslim World, the major powers of the West have yet to show movement, by seriously trying to resolve internationally recognized disputes affecting the Muslim world.

The industrialized world must support the endeavour for an Islamic renaissance especially through adequate financial and technical assistance and larger trade opportunities. Most importantly, justice must be offered to Islamic peoples in the form of resolution of all outstanding international disputes which affect Muslims. There is no time to lose. Action has to be taken before an iron curtain finally descends between the West and the Islamic World.

Mr. President,

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 erection of the illegal separation wall by them, 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 of the problem, realizing the vision of two states – Israel and Palestine – living side by side in peace, harmony and security. The US can and must play the role of a just broker of peace. Peace must succeed in the Middle East; failure, Mr. President, is no more an option.

Mr. President,

It has always been my conviction that Pakistan and India can resolve all their differences, including over Jammu and Kashmir, through a sincere dialogue. The dangerous confrontation of 2002 and the three wars prior to that between our two countries have demonstrated that there is no military solution to our problems. The aspiration for peace enjoys popular support in Pakistan and, I also believe, in India. Neither country can achieve its ambition for social and economic progress in the absence of peace. We must achieve peace for the sake of the impoverished people of South Asia – for their development and prosperity.

After several aborted attempts, Pakistan and India have been able to initiate Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and a composite dialogue this year to address all outstanding issues. Pakistan has pursued this process with complete sincerity, giving bilateralism a final chance. We feel that the dual channels of CBMs and the Dialogue Process must proceed in tandem. We also are firmly committed to resolving all disputes with India peacefully including the Kashmir dispute. This cannot be ignored. Its resolution cannot be inordinately delayed. We desire a resolution of Kashmir which is just and acceptable to India, Pakistan and the people of Kashmir. We also seek strategic stability with India. I am glad to say, Mr. President, that uptill now the normalization process has progressed well, in a cordial atmosphere. Now that the negotiations are entering the difficult stage of grappling with solutions to previously irreconcilable disputes, Pakistan hopes that India shows the same sincerity, flexibility and boldness that Pakistan will demonstrate. I look

forward to my meeting day after tomorrow with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. I would like to convey to him that this is the moment for peace – we must not allow it to slip away.

Mr. President,

Iraq has taken a serious turn, to the anguish of the entire world community. It is imperative that together with closing the Palestine and Kashmir fronts, we also wind down the Iraq confrontation. Pakistan stands for restoration of peace and stability in Iraq, ensuring its unity and territorial integrity. This can only be achieved through handing over governance authority to the people of Iraq and allowing them full control over their natural resources. Internal law and order and security can be best promoted by local Iraqi Police or Militia, which needs to be built up expeditiously. At an opportune time, and, on request of people and Government of Iraq, the Muslim World could play a role in bringing peace and harmony to this conflict torn Nation.

Mr. President,

The forthcoming elections in Afghanistan will be an important landmark in the country's progress towards democracy and stability. Pakistan will do all it can to prevent terrorists from using our territory to disrupt the Afghan election process. The subsequent Parliamentary elections in April 2005 would also augur well for self governance in Afghanistan. While the political channel is progressing well and we wish President Karzai all success, the process of building the Afghan National Army and reconstruction effort in Afghanistan needs to be accelerated to install durable peace in Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

In our globalized world, peace and development are interdependent – now more than ever. Despite dynamic growth in some parts of the developing world, economic and social disparities are increasing. The rich are richer; the poor are poorer. Over two billion people on our planet – a quarter of the world's population – live in abject poverty, afflicted by hunger, disease and conflict. Islands of peace and prosperity cannot coexist for long within oceans of instability and poverty.

A bold and innovative global strategy is required to redress the growing inequalities. Good governance is a precondition for development. But, it is equally essential to rectify the glaring inequities and imbalances in the international financial and trade systems. Official Development Assistance can and must be doubled. Innovative ways can and must be adopted to generate the financial resources required for development. The billions transferred abroad by corrupt leaders should be returned to the looted countries to finance poverty alleviation, education and health. International investment flows should be consciously directed to the poorer developing countries. It can unleash the latent power of the poor for consumption and production. We also know by now that trade, and not just aid, is the way to promote growth and to benefit from globalization. However, it has to be made more equitable. It should eliminate unfair agricultural subsidies, remove high and escalating tariffs that discriminate against the products of the poor and offer special and differential treatment to disadvantaged developing countries. In my view, we need more than a level playing field; we need a field tilted in favour of the developing countries.

Unless the world's leaders generate the political will required to agree and implement these measures urgently, the Millennium Development Goals, proclaimed by the United Nations, will remain a mirage.

Mr. President,

In Pakistan, we are well on the way to transforming our country into a modern, progressive, tolerant, democratic, Islamic state, reflecting the vision of our founding father, the Quaid-e-Azam. Democracy has been restored in Pakistan. The people have been empowered through a revolutionary Local Government System. Our women have been empowered. However, like other developing countries, Pakistan confronts several challenges. But, we are confident of success. Our governance is good. Our national priorities are clear.

Mr. President,

Today, there is welcome resurgence of support for multilateralism. This must be a multilateralism based on the principles of the UN Charter, a cooperative and democratic multilateralism. It must seek just, peaceful and durable solutions to conflicts and disputes. It must promote a programme for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It must foster global development and prosperity.

All our collective aspirations can be best pursued within this World Organization. The United Nations must be strengthened and revitalized to respond to the challenges of Twenty-first Century.

The UN Security Council should become more effective, democratic and representative. There is no agreement on the aspiration of a few States to acquire permanent membership of the Security Council. The overwhelming majority of states are against the creation of new centres of privilege. The Council should be enlarged to ensure the representation of the mostly small and medium states which have joined the United Nations over the last three decades. We have to consider new ideas to craft a consensus on the enlargement of elected members on the Security Council.

Mr. President,

Pakistan believes that a new consensus on peace, security and development, can and should be achieved on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations next year. The summit meeting suggested by the Secretary General for next year must lead to a negotiated Final Document adopted by consensus. This historic Summit will, I hope, create a new paradigm to achieve universal peace and prosperity.