



**BM 58. Genel Kurulu'nda
Yapılan Konuşma**

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∴ New York, 26 Eylül 2003 **M**r. President,

I should like to start by extending our warmest congratulations on your election as President of the 58th General Assembly and our full support. I also wish to pay tribute to H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan as the President of the 57th Assembly.

Today, the memories of so many innocent people who lost their lives during the horrors of September 11 and many other victims of terror all over the world, including in my country, are still very fresh in our minds. We also mourn the painful loss of our UN colleagues. They were working at the service of the international community, to secure peace and to uphold human dignity in Baghdad. The loss of Sergio Vieira de Mello was particularly tragic for us, as his visit to Ankara two weeks before his tragic death unfortunately turned out to be his last.

Terrorism is a crime against humanity. We are duty bound to eradicate this evil from the face of earth. And soon...

We must also not forget that there are other major challenges that remain to be addressed: poverty, illiteracy, organized crime, narcotics, ecological disasters, epidemics like AIDS, refugees, illegal human trade, gender inequality, corruption, racism and xenophobia and others.

Mr. President,

In the new global security environment, there is a clear and pressing need to strengthen international organizations and institutions. The United Na-

tions is at the top of the list. The many challenges that the world faces today underline the central role of the United Nations, as so ably highlighted by the Secretary General. The efforts to adapt this unique organization to the realities of today's international life should resolutely be pursued. The world needs a more representative, effective and efficient United Nations. In close cooperation with the UN, Turkey has accumulated over the years a vast experience in regional cooperation, peacekeeping and conflict prevention.

We have also shown a strong will to solve our bilateral foreign policy problems. Today, we have very good relations with some neighboring countries with which we experienced difficulties in the recent past. We are also doing our best to contribute to the solution of problems in the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Caucasus.

In order to promote harmony of civilizations, we convened a meeting between the European Union (EU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) countries, last year in Istanbul. Next year, both the NATO Summit and the OIC Ministerial Meeting will be held in this city.

My Government's reforms at home reflect a sustained effort to promote democracy, human rights, rule of law, civil society, good governance, accountability and gender equality to the highest standards set by the United Nations and the European Union. The results show that national and spiritual values can be in perfect harmony with the contemporary standards of life. Integration with the world is not possible without bringing our values and traditions in harmony with modernity.

It is on the strength of this increasingly relevant Turkish experience, and the richness of our ties with the international community that Turkey has decided to present its candidature for a seat in the Security Council for the years 2009-2010.

Mr. President,

The situation in the Middle East will remain of crucial significance for the evolution of the international environment for some time to come. We do not believe that the Middle East is condemned to eternal strife and suffering. This is one cradle of civilization that has enjoyed peace and prosperity for centuries. That is why we believe that it is feasible today to transform the Middle East into a region of security, cooperation and prosperity.

Today, there is an urgent need for a fresh start in the region. The situation in Iraq and the Arab-Israeli conflict are at the core of the efforts to bring stability to the region. The events of the year have brought Iraq to the beginning of a new era. All of us need to help the Iraqi nation in their formidable task of building their united, free, democratic and prosperous future.

It is therefore highly important for the United Nations Security Council to agree on a mandate responsive to the needs of stabilization and reconstruction. Iraq is our close neighbor and this country's future and that of the region's stability are inter-linked.

Mr. President,

In the Middle East, we are again witnessing the cycle of terror and violence taking hostage all efforts towards peace. We see the restoration of the channels of communication and dialogue between the Palestinians and the Israelis as the most urgent task in hand. We believe sending the elected President of the Palestinian National Authority into exile cannot serve any good purpose. We call upon the Israeli Government to review its position. At the same time, we urge the Palestinian side to exert every effort to prevent further terrorist attacks.

Turkey has close ties with both the Israelis and the Palestinians. We remain ready to contribute to the implementation of the "Road Map" which we believe has no alternative. We are also willing to contribute to the improvement of the security environment as needed, and to the alleviation of the harsh living conditions of the Palestinians.

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Mr. President,

In order to achieve progress, resources have to be utilized rationally and to the benefit of the people as the Iraqi case has shown. The need for reform is not a novelty in the Middle East. What may be new is the growing recognition that progress is dependent on political and social factors as well as economic ones. Gradual steps towards more representative structures that are subject to accountability are being taken by a number of countries in the Middle East. They deserve the encouragement of the international community.

Mr. President,

The world needs the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, not their proliferation. The inherent logic of this argument has been recognized by the community of nations that have adhered to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We strongly support the efforts aimed at increasing the membership to non-proliferation agreements and regimes.

Mr. President,

My country's regional policies are shaped by our desire to achieve durable peace and greater cooperation in our neighborhood. I have already outlined

our approach to the Middle East. To our West, the Balkans was, until not so long ago, in turmoil. This region has now come to enjoy relative peace and stability in the past two years. International organizations, notably NATO, the EU, the UN and the OSCE all played a major role in this turnaround. However, the situation in certain parts of the region should still be monitored continuously as they may turn into potential sources of destabilization.

We are determined to further enhance our relations with Greece along the current constructive dialogue process. We are pleased with the progress achieved so far. As highlighted by my distinguished Greek colleague Mr. Papandreu in his statement this morning, we have already covered considerable ground. As my Greek colleague, Mr. Papandreu has highlighted this morning, we have already covered considerable ground. We are convinced that the ongoing dialogue and the resulting atmosphere of mutual confidence will serve the interests of both Turkey and Greece.

Mr. President,

Turkey sincerely desires a lasting political settlement establishing a new partnership in Cyprus. This issue is with us since 1963. The attempts to distort the facts in the island will not help the efforts aiming at a comprehensive settlement. We continue to support the good offices mission of the United Nations Secretary-General. A new partnership in Cyprus should be based on a compromise between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots, and on equal status. Furthermore, a settlement should preserve bi-zonality in the Island, and ensure the security of the Turkish Cypriot people.

At the present stage in Cyprus, it is necessary to create the basis for substantive negotiations. The window of opportunity opened by President Denktaş's latest proposals designed to overcome the lack of confidence between the two sides should be seized. Indeed, the Greek Cypriot side, instead of trying to take advantage of its prospect of unilateral accession to the European Union, should act in a spirit of goodwill and contribute to the negotiating process. All embargoes and restrictions imposed upon the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus should be lifted as a matter of priority.

Mr. President,

The Caucasus is another strategically important area of close interest for Turkey. In the Caucasus, the long-standing conflicts must end, and good neighborly relations and regional cooperation should be given a real chance to flourish. Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhazia problems still endanger peace and stability in the entire region.

Turkey expects Armenia to fully comply with the relevant UN resolutions in order to find a prompt and just solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The peaceful settlement of this conflict will positively contribute to the normalization of the Turkish-Armenian relations and also to regional co-operation. As regards the Abkhazian conflict, Turkey believes that a peaceful settlement should be reached within the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political unity of Georgia.

Mr. President,

Close historical and cultural bonds with Central Asia constitute one of the pillars of our Eurasian vision. We have developed mutually beneficial bilateral relations with the Central Asian states following their independence. We should make substantial efforts to improve regional stability and security, and continue to support these States with a view to bringing about their further integration with the international community. We all know the security of Central Asia is inseparable from global security.

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Traditionally a close friend, Turkey has contributed for many years to the rehabilitation of Afghanistan. We are pleased that the Bonn Process has so far been implemented successfully, despite numerous difficulties. In this respect, we commend the performance of the Transitional Administration. The success of the Bonn Process will depend to a large extent on greater support of the international community.

Mr. President,

We strongly believe that it will not be possible to establish global stability unless peace, security, democracy and sustainable development are promoted in Africa. Recent trends in the management of crises in Africa, as well as the initiative on the New Partnership for Africa's Development give us fresh hopes in this regard.

In conclusion, I should stress that Turkey is determined to remain a major contributor to peace, security and stability in her region and beyond. Turkey follows a multi-dimensional foreign policy that is active in various geographies. We believe in the vital role of the United Nations and its increased relevance in the present international environment, and are committed to promoting the effectiveness of our Organization.

I thank you, Mr. President.