



Permanent Mission of Germany  
to the United Nations

**Address**

**by Dr. Klaus Scharioth,**

**State Secretary of the Foreign Office,**

**Federal Republic of Germany**

**at the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**New York, 20 September 2005**

*Check against delivery!*

Mr President,

Please accept my congratulations on your election as President of this historic sixtieth session of the General Assembly. I wish you every success. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the outgoing President of the fifty-ninth session for his dedicated work. I endorse the statement of the EU Presidency.

The debate at last week's Summit highlighted one important point, namely that peace, development, security and human rights are inseparably linked. One cannot address human rights and security without also addressing development. All of these issues are at the very heart of our policies.

People are waiting for our solutions to the pressing problems of development. We must achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Of that we are acutely aware, both in Germany and in Europe. The EU plan to reach the 0.7 % ODA goal in steps by 2015 and the G8 commitments made at Gleneagles substantially strengthen the financial basis of our work.

We are also willing to forge new paths by making use of innovative financing mechanisms.

At the same time, fair framework conditions for international trade are a prerequisite if poorer states are to share the benefits of globalization. The EU is leading the way with its "Everything but Arms" initiative, which grants the least developed countries duty-free and quota-free market access. In this context we must do all we can to make the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong this December a success. Only in this way we can bring the Doha Round negotiations to a successful conclusion.

We also know that excessive indebtedness brakes growth and development. The realignment of the HIPC initiative after 1999 has considerably reduced the indebtedness of some 27 states. Germany has to date forgiven 6.5 billion euro of debt and has earmarked a further 4 billion euro for the continuation of the HIPC initiative.

Debt relief is however dependent on all creditors spreading the burden fairly between themselves. We are alarmed by the fact that commercial and state creditors outside the Paris Club are doing less and less to live up to their responsibilities. I would like to seize this opportunity to call for your support at the forthcoming Annual Meeting of the Bretton Woods Institutions for the G8 proposal and for an extensive cancellation of debts, including multilateral debts, for the countries concerned.

All of this emphasizes the great importance we attach to the global partnership for development. This partnership is not, however, a one-way street. It also requires a commitment on the part of our partner states to put in place the conditions for development – democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and measures against corruption.

Mr President,

Climate protection and development are also closely entwined. Of course everyone must have access to energy. Nevertheless, all states must do their part to prevent the ominous advance of climate change. In late November the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol will meet in Montreal. There we will have the opportunity to adopt effective mechanisms to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases post-2012. Precisely that is the strategy pursued by the Kyoto Protocol. It is a strategy we will adhere to.

Two natural catastrophes – the tsunami in the Indian Ocean and hurricane Katrina in the United States of America – have year clearly demonstrated just how vulnerable our societies are to natural disasters. And we have all learned just how important disaster prevention is. With the Third International Conference on Early Warning in Bonn in March 2006, Germany hopes to make a contribution towards making better use of and improving early warning mechanisms and thereby limiting the scale of the damage caused by such events. I would like to use this address to reiterate our invitation to all member states to join us in making the Bonn Conference a success.

Mr President,

In many regions of the world the UN's engagement over the past years and months has been a welcome sign of protection and assistance, of peace and reconstruction.

Last Sunday saw the first free parliamentary elections in Afghanistan under the new constitution. Afghanistan now has a full complement of the democratically legitimated institutions to assume responsibility for the further reconstruction of the country. By going to the polls, millions of women and men in Afghanistan have proven that they have chosen the path of democracy. Our thanks goes to the United Nations, which worked hard to make these elections possible.

In his latest report on Afghanistan the Secretary-General announced that the United Nations will remain committed to assisting the country after the elections. I welcome this most emphatically; such help is indispensable. For even if the Bonn Process, launched four years ago, has now been brought to a successful conclusion, the international community will still need to stand by Afghanistan. Germany, too, will continue to do its utmost to support the country.

Mr President,

Ten years after the conclusion of the Dayton Agreement and six years after the end of the Kosovo conflict, the situation in the Western Balkans has improved tangibly. Nonetheless, major progress is still required in the political, legal and economic fields. People there must genuinely come to terms with the past, and there must be reconciliation between the parties to the conflict. In this context we call not least for full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

Mr President,

The Middle East still faces great challenges. As its neighbours, we in Europe have a strategic interest in peace and stability in the region. We are convinced that only through reform, the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law can lasting stability be guaranteed. The free and fair parliamentary elections in Palestine and Lebanon are encouraging signs of change.

The Middle East Peace Process has also gained new momentum in the past months. We emphatically welcome the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the northern part of the West Bank. Now it is vital that Israelis, Palestinians and the international community do all they can to lay the foundations for political and economic stability in the Gaza Strip. Our efforts focus on a two-state solution based on the road map. The objective remains a viable Palestinian state, living side by side with Israel within secure and recognized borders.

Mr President,

The international community is united in its determination to help Iraq establish democracy and the rule of law. We want all Iraqis to be able to live without fear and material hardship. The forces of terror and violence must not and shall not be permitted to win the upper hand. The Middle East needs a stable, prosperous Iraq.

Here too the United Nations is making its contribution towards the process of political transition and reconstruction. This is why we have provided considerable financial assistance for the protection force whose presence allows the UN to work in Iraq. And this is also why Germany has, at Iraq's request, advised the country on constitutional issues.

Mr President,

The Iranian nuclear programme continues to be a major cause of concern. Past violations of international obligations, a lack of transparency and insufficient cooperation with the subsequent investigations have shattered any confidence that the programme is for exclusively peaceful purposes.

Germany, France and the United Kingdom have, with the support of the EU High Representative, worked with Iran on finding a way to restore confidence. These efforts have received broad support from the international community.

However, Tehran's continued disregard of IAEA decisions does not help restore confidence. On the contrary, the gains made to date are being put at risk for no good reason. Our concerns do not relate to Iran's right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. This has never been and will not be put in question.

Our readiness to work on solutions which include objective guarantees that the Iranian nuclear programme can only serve peaceful ends remains unaltered. I appeal to Iran to refrain from taking unilateral measures and to return to the negotiating table.

There is general agreement that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is now more than ever a life-threatening risk to us all. It is thus all the more regrettable that no consensus could be found for the inclusion of a chapter on non-proliferation and disarmament in the

outcome document. If we want to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, all states must fulfil their obligations. At the same time new momentum must be brought to nuclear disarmament.

In this context I welcome the latest progress made by the six-party talks towards resolving the nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula. It is a vital first step.

Mr President,

Africa is in many ways a touchstone and example for an "effective multilateral system". The United Nations' close cooperation with the African Union, as well as with ECOWAS, has had a beneficial impact in Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Côte d'Ivoire and, recently, in Burundi. The United Nations is also playing an equally important role in the efforts to stabilize the Great Lakes region.

Following the death of John Garang, the peace process in the Sudan requires even greater commitment from all parties to implementing the historic Nairobi peace agreement. The UN mission in the Sudan, UNMIS, to which Germany has contributed personnel, is making a major contribution. At the same time, however, we must not neglect the other crisis areas, in particular Darfur. The African Union mission in Darfur, AMIS, has helped stabilize the security situation in the area where it is stationed.

Mr President,

The variety of problems facing us – poverty, social polarization, global population growth, inadequate water supplies and global climate change, to name only the most pressing – serves to highlight just how necessary concerted action is. We must prepare the United Nations for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Over the past twelve months the reform of the United Nations has been intensively debated. The member states, the High-Level Panel and the Secretary-General himself have provided valuable input. Some of their proposals are contained in the outcome document adopted at last week's World Summit.

However, we will only be able to talk of true achievement once we have also managed to implement these proposals. To be a success, this process requires the active participation of all member states.

The tasks that the Summit has set the General Assembly must be tackled with speed and focus. This new session of the General Assembly must make a breakthrough towards the adoption of the comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

It must also work on the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission.

Sustainable peace requires more than merely restoring security. The phase of post-conflict peacebuilding is particularly crucial. The sooner reconstruction can begin, and the better coordinated the peace-making and post-conflict recovery efforts are, the better are the chances of lasting stabilization. The Summit took a vital step in this direction by deciding to establish the Peacebuilding Commission by the end of the year.

Mr President,

Secretary-General Kofi Annan has said that "no security agenda and no drive for development will be successful unless they are based on ... respect for human dignity". If we wish to lend greater weight to the protection and promotion of human rights, we must also strengthen the relevant UN bodies and mechanisms.

Germany therefore welcomes the decision taken by the Summit to create a Human Rights Council, which will replace the Commission on Human Rights. The General Assembly must now move fast to define the mandate and structures of the Human Rights Council. It must ensure that the new body enjoys greater legitimacy than its predecessor and that its working methods are more effective, especially when it comes to responding to acute crises.

Mr President,

A glance at the trouble spots around the world makes it clear that we, the international community, face far more conflicts in the South than in the North. Key decisions on settling these conflicts are taken in the Security Council which, under the UN Charter, has prime responsibility for maintaining peace. Its composition however still reflects the world of 1945 and not that of the

21<sup>st</sup> century. Adjusting and expanding the membership of the Security Council by adding both permanent and non-permanent members thus remains essential. A reform of the United Nations that does not include reform of the Security Council is not worthy of its name.

The Security Council is in danger of losing its authority and legitimacy if entire continents and major contributors are not adequately represented. Germany and its partners Brazil, India and Japan therefore submitted a proposal on reform of the Council. It is the only proposal that includes a comprehensive reform of the Security Council and its working methods. It thus remains the only proposal capable of obtaining the necessary two-thirds majority in the General Assembly. Of that we are convinced.

The reform of the Security Council is an indispensable part of the overhaul of the UN. In last week's summit document we all pledged to swiftly advance these reforms. We do not only need progress, we need results. The time is ripe for radical reform. Let us use this session of the General Assembly to finally resolve this issue that is so vital to the future of the United Nations.

Thank you.