



STATEMENT

by

the President of the Republic of Tajikistan

H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon

at the

General Debates of the 63rd Session of the UNGA

25 September 2008, New York

Distinguished Mr. President,
Distinguished Secretary-General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. First of all, allow me to congratulate you on your election to the lofty office of the President of the General Assembly and express hope that under your leadership the 63rd session of the General Assembly will achieve its goals, the most important of which is further strengthening of the UN system for the sake of peace and international security, and addressing the global issues which are turning into the challenges of the 21 century.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. This year the mankind has faced a number of interrelated crises, namely, energy, food, climate and finance crises that caused the general crisis of development. The consequences of the newly emerged challenges had the most severe impact on the social mood of millions of people in the developing countries and the states with economies in transition, my country among them.

But people have not lost their hope for a more just and successful world. They pin their hope on the powerful and efficient United Nations Organization, which is capable of mobilizing its resources and channeling them to the solution of the most urgent issues of the day. We believe that there is an urgent need to efficiently develop a dialogue and cooperation among all the entities of the multipolar world, and to avoid application of double standards in the international practice. It is equally important not to allow races, religions, continents and regions to be set against one another.

3. Not a single country in the world, even the most powerful one, is capable of meeting single handedly the challenges of our time that range from climate change to uncompromising combat against international terrorism. Nowadays, like never before, the new generation of global issues requires a collective response, and the UN, entrusted with a broad mandate, is the only one existing instrument capable of addressing them.

4. Particularly, it concerns the human right to a dignified food provision. Due to dramatic rise in prices for food and energy resources the achievement of the MDGs is called in question.

The food crisis affected the poorest population in the most negative way. In Tajikistan where 93 per cent of the entire territory are covered with mountains, and only 7 per cent are suitable for agriculture the food crisis affected two third of the households. Additional concerted efforts and efficient measures are required to avoid further aggravation of the situation with food security in the world. Under the circumstances usage of food produce for bio fuel production sounds as antihuman and immoral.

Our hope is that donor states will undertake all the necessary political, financial and economic measures to prevent aggravation of the food crisis, which could bring about further impoverishment of millions of people.

We also expect that official international assistance will be forwarded, on an increasing scale, to the development of agriculture, and the artificially created barriers in trade will be eventually removed.

It is quite obvious that the UN should play the key role in addressing the food crisis and urgent changing of the world agricultural policy.

5. Tajikistan supports the activities of the UN Interagency Task Force on Global Food Crisis, which was given the assignment to design measures of urgent response to **the food crisis**. The efforts of the Task Force should also be focused on assistance in developing common and agreed long-term approaches towards ensuring food security. The High level meeting in Rome on food security and the adoption of the Declaration constitute an important step in this direction.

It is necessary to revitalize, within the UN Food and Agricultural Organization, activities in the field of transfer of advanced technologies and seeds, and rendering financial technical assistance to developing countries. We call on to enhance support to those programs of assistance that are being implemented through the World Food program.

6. Lives of millions of people on earth, among them women and children, depend on exercising the human right for a dignified food supply.

This issue does not require long discussions but rather resolute practical actions since the food crisis, which deprives human beings of their dignity, is not a lesser threat than terrorism itself.

We believe that the world leading countries should act more responsibly in order to mitigate the consequences of the global financial, food and energy crises, particularly, with regard to the poor and developing states, which are mostly affected by the devastating consequences of these phenomena.

7. Tajikistan that possesses fertile soil and is rich in water resources can make its own contribution to the solution of the above problem. Over 55 per cent of all water resources of the Central Asia region originate in Tajikistan. This amount of water is sufficient not only for meeting the freshwater needs of irrigated agriculture and other economic branches of the region, but also can serve as a major source for generating ecologically sound electrical energy. Notably, the hydropower capacity of Tajikistan is estimated at 527 billion kWt/h, and only 5 percent of them are currently being utilized.

Only an integrated and mutually advantageous approach of the states of the region towards utilization of hydropower and other natural resources will ensure sustainable development of Central Asia and contribute to the solution of food and ecological problems, which are closely related to rational use of these resources. Only mutually advantageous cooperation on their rational and efficient use can bring well being to the peoples that inhabit this vast region. We do count that our plans will be supported by the Bretton-Woods institutions and the UN partners from the private sector.

I am confident that it is necessary to create such an economic mechanism for transferring water and energy resources that could accommodate the interests of both the upper stream countries, rich in water resources, and the down stream countries, mostly rich in hydrocarbon raw materials.

8. As for the problem of climate change, it already affects our region, and first and foremost, our water resources. As a result of global warming the area of Tajikistan glaciers has diminished by over 30 per cent.

The last three years witnessed the low water level in the rivers, which in its turn caused burning social and economic problems due to resulted drought, invasion of locust, and a number of other difficulties. Without implementing hydropower projects our country will not be able to achieve the MDGs, nor to ensure its sustainable growth, which was vividly proved by the unprecedentedly severe winter of the last year that revealed all the difficulties of the transitional period. The forthcoming winter and summer are expected to be even more challenging.

9. It is quite obvious that water is irreplaceable because it is needed not only for sustaining human lives but also for industrial purposes, environmental protection and the entire development process.. Addressing urgent water-related issues, developing international cooperation in the water area – these are the goals of the International Decade of *Water for Life*, 2005-2015 that was initiated by the Republic of Tajikistan.

I kindly invite member states to delegate their representatives for the participation in the World Water Forum to be held in Dushanbe in 2010, for a joint review of the practical implementation of the internationally agreed “ international water agenda”.

Despite numerous water events held the world over at different levels in recent years the water issue remains urgent. **For this reason, in order to consider and address water issues in a comprehensive manner, in order to consolidate efforts undertaken at the national, regional and global levels the Republic of Tajikistan puts forward a proposal to convene a special GA session which would review progress gained in the achievement of the goals set by the Water decade and identify the reference points for further actions.**

10. Today, alongside with the General Debates at the UN Headquarters there being held a High level event on the Millennium Development Goals.

My country regards the timely achievement of MDGs as a priority issue. The Government of Tajikistan has been implementing the *National Strategy for Development of the Republic of Tajikistan through 2015*, which was developed at the initiative of the UN and with its direct involvement, and which demonstrates a principally new approach towards ensuring of development. It takes into account the world experience in development and implementation of similar strategic documents, as well as lessons drawn and conclusions made during the previous stages of the country’s development, and also takes into consideration the existing realities and prospects for development.

Meanwhile, I have to note that the federal financing of the social sector of the country is limited by the growth rate of real economy.

11. It is obvious that the achievement of MDGs in many respects depends on the approach of the international community towards the issue of rendering assistance to developing countries, and timely mobilization of internal and external resources. **In this respect, Tajikistan associates itself with the appeals addressed to the donors community to double assistance**

for the purpose of development, which is of ultimate importance for support of sustainable growth and for achievement of internationally agreed goals.

The proposal to relief debts accrued by the developing countries in exchange for the implementation of national projects in the field of sustainable development remains relevant. The sky rocketing and in many respects artificially boosted prices for hydrocarbon raw materials and food produce considerably aggravated yet complicated financial situation of the poor and developing countries. **Partial signing off the debts remains relevant since it would release funds that could be invested the in education and the entire social sector, as well as in environmental protection, combating HIV/AIDS and other goals.**

The forthcoming review of the Monterrey conference on financing of development to be held in Doha is going to provide a good opportunity for further development of effective measures aimed at meeting the needs in resources required for the attainment of MGDs. Our hope is that the meeting in Doha will give a new impetus to the Monterrey consensus and will enhance the spirit of global partnership and solidarity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. The situation in Afghanistan devastated by a long conflict and violence, gives rise to a grounded concern.

Afghanistan needs not only increased military presence on its territory but rather a target economic, technical and humanitarian assistance. Experience shows that often military actions aimed at combating terrorist groups are far less effective than thoroughly thought non-violent political and economic measures.

It is necessary to urgently and realistically assess the possibility of involving other influential regional players into the solution of the Afghan issue, in particular, the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization.**

13. Strengthening of international cooperation on combating terrorism is inseparable from counteracting illicit drug trafficking.

It is important to assist the Government of Afghanistan in destroying the existing technological and finance chains of modern drug producing industry. **Consolidated efforts will enhance achievement of the goals set by the Global Counterterrorist Strategy and Paris Declaration.**

14. The global system of counteracting terrorism, transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking, which is currently being shaped, can not be built without the support from the regional organizations. In this regard, Tajikistan salutes the efforts of the UN to expand its cooperation with relevant regional organizations.

These are rather powerful structures, and their involvement in addressing global issues will not allow modern challenges and threats to acquire undesirable magnitude.

15. The UN and peace building are two inseparable notions. We do understand those who selflessly worked at the UN Office for Peace Building in Tajikistan, and pay tribute to those who lost their lives while performing their professional duty. The model of settlement of the inter-Tajik conflict with the assistance of the UN and guarantor states has been acknowledged as a unique example of both peace building efforts and preventive diplomacy.

We support the initiative of the UN Secretary-General to reform the peace keeping mechanism, and believe that it is essential to continue rendering relevant political, financial and logistics support to the peace keeping personnel assisting them to cope with their difficult mission.

Tajikistan approves of the priority attention given by the UN to the enhancement of efficiency of assistance rendered to the countries that lived through internal conflicts, and supports the activities of the Peace Building Commission that is called upon to contribute to ensuring coordination and enhancing efficiency of international assistance to such countries.

To strengthen peace and stability the countries that lived through internal conflicts need not only humanitarian assistance but also actual assistance in dealing with their economic and social problems, as well as support of their efforts aimed at establishing a foundation essential for transition to sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

16. This year the international community celebrated the 1150th anniversary of the birth of Abuabduhlohi Rudaki, the founder of the Tajik-Persian literature. The essence of his moral philosophy is reduced to praising such eternal spiritual values as kindness and beauty, tolerance and mutual assistance.

Today, a few centuries later, the poetry by Rudaki continues to call for strengthening friendship among nations, for expanding a dialogue among civilizations, and sings hymn to humanism and harmony.

As it was noted by the UN Secretary, quote, *“The legacy left by Rudaki serves as inspiration to the Alliance of civilizations, the UN initiative aimed at combating extremism and disagreements that threaten peace”*, end of quote.

I am confident that common human values that were praised by Rudaki, are in harmony with the objectives pursued today by the UN world wide. I am very optimistic about our ability to make this world a better place, and to meet the aspirations and hopes of our peoples.

Thank you for attention.