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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY ING. CARLOS MORALES TRONCOSO, MINISTER
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT THE 60TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

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Mr. President:

Allow me to join others in expressing our heartfelt congratulations on your election to preside this historic assembly, which we trust you will do in an efficient and fruitful manner. I would also like to recognize Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his valuable contributions and leadership. Lastly, I would like to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Jean Ping, of Gabon, and recognize the noteworthiness of his work in the past assembly.

This sixtieth General Assembly will be recorded in history as one of the most pivotal sessions of the United Nations.

Proof of this lies in two outstanding items of your agenda.

First, the accountability *on* the state of compliance with the Millennium Development Goals and the renewal of the commitments made to achieve them.

Second, setting the course for reform in this organization to adapt to the challenges we currently

peace in the world.

For nations such as the one I represent, the ambitious agenda set forth to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015 has become the most important program for the government.

What could be more important to underdeveloped small nations, with scarce natural resources, than to lead their people out of the economic and social abyss of poverty, lack of education, poor health, and unemployment?

No political action – at least not in the Dominican Republic – can be of greater urgency.

However, eliminating poverty in the world is a monumental task, one that requires unrelenting political commitment, collective participation from all societies, and unrestricted economic support from the more developed nations.

The frightening realities of the present, morally unacceptable to a world centered on the human being, have demonstrated how flawed the zero-sum policy practiced in the past really was, when the great powers were devoted to increasing their wealth by exploiting poorer and weaker nations.

Widespread poverty is not good for poor nations, but it isn't good for wealthy nations either. Poverty leads to despair, violence, and chaos, which, in turn, produce intolerable social and political tension, and cause outbreaks of conflict leading to the collapse of States.

When a State collapses, the conflicts that boil within it expand. They take the form of regional conflicts or unending, unstoppable waves of migration.

In the world we currently live in, a state's collapse is brought to the attention of the United Nations, and demands solutions.

In analyzing that reality, compliance with the Millennium Development Goals becomes a crucial matter.

But allow me to emphasize something at this time.

It is alarming that in 2015, the year in which the Millennium Development Goals should be achieved, the production of oil, precisely the fuel which has enabled the world to achieve such spectacular growth in the past 100 years, is projected to start to seriously decline.

To predict the future one has only to take a good look at the present.

The leaders of the world are facing the problems caused by high oil prices, and we are all aware that in contrast to the oil price shock of the seventies, the reduction in the flow of fuel could now be of a more definitive nature.

I emphasize this because our nations are running the risk of encountering, on all fronts, difficulties that multiply endlessly.

It is likewise disturbing that this should happen precisely when monumental efforts are being made to overcome the limitations that prevent us from taking advantage of the opportunities available to ensure a dignified, free, and safe society for our people.

The foreseen global crisis can cause a continued reduction in the production of oil, with the immediate result, higher oil prices, having catastrophic effects that we cannot ignore.

We have known for a long time that oil was not going to last us an eternity.

This is the right time for the United Nations to launch an initiative with a broader scope than the agenda of the Millennium Development Goals, to set a course that leads Member States to a civilization without oil.

Mr. President:

My country, the Dominican Republic, shares the small Caribbean island of Hispaniola with Haiti. It is necessary to say that, historically, the problems on one side of the border have become problems for the other side as well.

Furthermore, Haiti, with a history of 200 years of independence, is today an unstable nation.

Amidst insurmountable economic difficulties and all types of social duress, the internal political conflicts invalidated its institutions, and its State collapsed.

A transitional regime, without the sufficient resources to function properly, is making efforts to rebuild what has been destroyed with the support of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), while the international community hopes to restore the legitimacy of political authority through an election process.

We have heard many express that the electoral process in Haiti should not have been given top priority in place of humanitarian assistance and the creation of jobs through a massive program to build infrastructure such as roads, aqueducts, schools, hospitals and electric generators.

However, past experience in the process of reconstructing collapsed States highlights the need to legitimize new political leadership through an electoral process, knowing that in such cases an ideal framework to hold elections is never achieved.

This is why, in the name of my country's President, Dr. Leonel Fernández, I am proposing that the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti initiates, with the support of the transitional government of Haiti and the international community, a comprehensive national dialogue which ends in a general agreement between the political forces and the organized sectors of Haitian civil society.

Such an agreement would ensure national reconciliation and set the foundation for a plan to rebuild the country with the commitment of all Haitian leadership.

All Haitian civil society and political leadership have pivotal roles to play in the institutional reconstruction of their country, and it should be demanded that they fulfill these responsibilities.

We cannot close our eyes to the fact that the Haitian people have been living in fear and insecurity, poverty and despair, for, so long. To achieve stability, they need to be surrounded by an atmosphere of confidence in the peace and reconciliation process, as well as during the reinstatement of State institutions.

Additionally, our President proposes, that in order to give more credibility to the electoral process, that MINUSTAH invite distinguished world leaders to be present during the elections in Haiti.

Among these statesmen, I will take the liberty of suggesting the names of Presidents Vicente Fox, of Mexico; Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, of Brazil; and former United States Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, and the legendary former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela.

Elections are the first step to help Haiti get back on its feet. We are not under the illusion that elections alone will guarantee security, represent democracy in the immediate future, or produce an overnight improvement in the living conditions of Haitians.

Our own experience has taught us that the road to democracy will be a long one, as it has been for the nations that today lead the way within the framework of democratic institutions. And the road towards development will be even more extensive, but more secure, if tensions are reduced, a climate of cooperation is fostered, and if donor nations and institutions faithfully and timely fulfill their generous promises of financial support for Haiti.

Mr, President:

On the subject of peace, security, and dialogue, we want to comment on two items that are very high on the international political agenda.

First, the progress made in the peace process between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority. The Dominican Republic reiterates its hope and confidence that both parties will place the welfare of its citizens and peaceful coexistence above any particular political aspiration, and that they will commit to a lasting peace process.

Second, we would like to refer to the current situation on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. The Dominican Republic is an advocate of dialogue instead of confrontation in order to reach the stability required by both sides to develop their economic, political, social, and spiritual potential.

Mr. President:

The natural disasters which have recently taken place in Asia and in the United States of America are forcing us to think about the vulnerabilities of nations in the face of these types of events and in the potentially dangerous changes that man has caused to the balance of nature.

The international community must renew its commitment with the mechanisms and action plans that already exist to confront these changes and prevent, insofar *as* possible, the loss of human life.

Mr. President:

We live in a global interdependent world in which no nation can prevail by itself. However, it is a world with such pronounced inequalities as evidenced in the terrifying statistic that half of its population lives in poverty.

There is no time to lose.

Let us act today, *as* if this were our last opportunity to reach consensus and design action to turn sustainable development into a collective achievement, to ensure peace and world security.

Thank you.
