



Assembly President-elect links peace and security to poverty and human rights



General Assembly President-elect Ali Abdussalam Treki addresses press conference

12 June 2009 – The President-elect of the United Nations General Assembly today said tackling poverty and human rights issues is essential for global peace and security and would be high on the agenda of the forthcoming session of the 192-member body.

Ali Abdussalam Treki of Libya told a news conference at UN Headquarters that the Assembly's "priorities are peace and security, a question that concerns the entire world, a question that will undoubtedly be considered in many different contexts and under different items."

Among them, he said, was poverty.

"We have a world of rich people and poor people and the gap between them is forever widening, and that places a great responsibility on all of us, particularly if we truly want to avoid further wars," he said. "We should allocate enough efforts and enough resources to fight poverty, disease, and to provide for good education and healthcare."

Mr. Treki said, "Freedom and human rights in social, economic and cultural terms – rights to food, to housing, to education and health care – these are all extremely important issues that have to do with our peace and security."

Asked about the utility of what some people called "repetitive" Assembly resolutions about the occupied Palestinian territory, he said "it is not the fault of the Palestinians that they are not implemented. If they had been given their legitimate rights, we wouldn't be in this situation."

Turning to nuclear weapons, the President-elect said he had noted that the countries most actively concerned with a potentially nuclear armed Iran "are the ones who have nuclear weapons."

He said nuclear weapons should be removed from the entire world.

"Everyone knows Israel has nuclear weapons," he said. "Who should we start with, a country that actually has nuclear weapons, or a country that is attempting to get it?"

Nuclear disarmament should start "first with Israel and then with Iran, in the same context."

Mr. Treki served as Libya's Ambassador to the UN three times and is currently the Minister of African Union Affairs. He will take up his post when the Assembly begins its 64th session on 15 September.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon earlier this week [congratulated](#) Mr. Treki on his [election](#) as President, saying his “wide-ranging diplomatic experience will be invaluable as he presides over the General Assembly.”

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