

Assembly President heralds 'new era of engagement' as debate wraps up



General Assembly President Ali Treki

29 September 2009 – Wrapping up the General Assembly's annual high-level debate today, the 192-member body's President today welcomed the "new era of engagement" based on respect among Member States, underscoring that the vision of nations coming together to tackle common challenges is at the heart of the United Nations.

"I am heartened that inside this hall, as well as outside, in the various meetings and events on the sidelines, there was a renewed commitment to promoting effective and inclusive multilateralism," Ali Treki **said** at the end of the six-day event.

This form of engagement, he said, will also entail "a more just and democratic world order with equal participation of sovereign Member States."

In particular, he voiced concern about whether the interests of developing nations are taken into account.

The high-level segment also featured calls by States for greater coherence and understanding among regional and political groupings, as well as appeals for dialogue among faiths and cultures, the President pointed out.

"The General Assembly is uniquely placed to synergize our efforts in that regard and to forge collective strategies for the common good," he said.

Small island nations spoke passionately about the threat to their survival posed by climate change, with Dr. Treki stressing that no country will be spared from its impact.

"Climate change is a growing global threat which will have consequences for the global economy, health and safety, food production, peace and security and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals [**MDGs**]," eight anti-poverty targets with a 2015 deadline, he added.

Collective action is also needed to prevent conflicts and settle disputes, the Libyan official said, underscoring the need for successes in Africa, especially in the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The situation in the Middle East is "unsustainable," he said. The efforts of United States President Barack Obama to achieve a lasting peace, Dr. Treki emphasized, will need the "full backing of the international community and a more effective role of the United Nations.

Multilateralism, he highlighted, is also essential to address the current financial turmoil which threatens sustainable development and has hit developing nations especially hard.

"I have noted your suggestions for strengthening the international economic system, including the Bretton Woods Institutions, with a view to making them more inclusive, transparent and democratic in their decision-making."

At the start of the annual high-level debate last week, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for the international community to be both united in purpose and in action since the world's most pressing problems can only be solved when countries unite through the UN.

"Now is our time. A time to put the 'united' back into the United Nations," Mr. Ban **emphasized.**

Simultaneous crises on multiple fronts – food, energy, recession and pandemic flu – have shown the importance of renewed multilateralism, he said.

"The world looks to us for answers," the Secretary-General stressed, adding that the moment is now to "create a United Nations of genuine collective action."

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