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**STATEMENT
BY
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PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**

United Nations General Assembly
Sixty Fifth Session
General Debate

New York, September 23rd, 2010

**Dear Mr. President,
Distinguished Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a special honor for me to address the 65th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. I would like, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your election to this important position. Your experience and up to the present engagement strengthens my conviction that you will take the achievements of your predecessor even further. Albania will fully support you during the completion of your mandate. I take this opportunity to express our special appreciation for the Secretary-General, for his continuing efforts to revitalize the global role of the United Nations, as well as to bring reforms to this important organization.

Mr. President,

Albania supports the opinion that the role of the UN remains powerful, coherent, and irreplaceable in the center of an effective global dynamics. It must be further encouraged, must be supported in its challenges for an open international cooperation, for a sustainable peace and security, for an unstoppable development, and for a higher standard of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Today, we live in a global world, interconnected and interdependent, where states and nations assist and support each other to find an all inclusive answer to the common problems and new challenges that the world is facing. Multilateralism remains a priority for all of the international community. Under this context, a reformed UN, revitalized, dynamic, powerful and effective, constitutes a necessity in the complicated process of global governance. In this cooperation path of global governance, the role of the United Nations is irreplaceable especially regarding the use of human and material resources.

Rapid world developments, that have their positive and negative consequences surely affecting the challenges of the future, must be treated with special care and priority. The challenging agenda of the UN must be focused in the strengthening of peace and security, fight against terrorism, in issues of stable development, climate change, reduction of poverty, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, coping with the natural disasters, human rights, migration, etc.

Albania remains committed to contribute to this agenda and the undeniable role of the Organization and its agencies which through administration of the budget and human resources may adapt to the requests of the member states.

The establishment of the Gender Equality Entity is the testimony of the most recent and tangible success of the reform in the UN. The strengthening of the role of women in society will help not just politics but also the emancipation and harmonized development of them.

Mr. President,

The objectives of Millennium Development constitute a priority goal of our work. Albania, after the approval of the Declaration of the Millennium about a decade ago, is showing progress towards meeting the Millennium Objectives in all areas and its indicators, as it is also continuing

to pay great attention to the issues of development by making great efforts to integrate them in the strategy of national development.

We are fully committed to reach the goals of “*Acquis Communautaire*” of the European Union, which is a process that will be accompanied by increasing investments in social issues, construction of government systems, local or central, and also of the capacities of development in order to guarantee continuing improvements regarding the well-being of the Albanian people.

However, above all, Albania, as a member of NATO, with internal democratic stability is seeking a growing international position, as a condition of its long-term development.

“Delivering as One” is a crucial factor of the reform to assist the development of countries. The System of All-inclusive Coherence of the UN offers a real possibility to transform the UN into a more effective organization. Albania, as one of the pilot countries is experiencing the success story by showing from the first day the whole necessary engagement towards this project. The “One UN” concept in Albania is being developed in full accordance with the national sovereignty, the national ownership of development, as well as by responding to the needs of the country.

The responsibility that comes from being a pilot country encourages us more to make this initiative a success. This also is an opportunity for us to contribute to the global reformation of the UN.

Albania has signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the UN. Albania, as a NATO member, makes for a factor of peace and stability in the region and more. It not just follows a policy of good neighborly relations and is working for the preservation and strengthening of stability in the region, but also is interested and engaged in the stability and peace in other parts of the world through contributing military and civilian troops in different peacekeeping missions under the framework of the UN and other security organizations. Part of this vision and engagement has also been the participation in the Chad mission of MINURCAT, in Afghanistan and in Iraq. We are willing to contribute with peacekeeping troops anywhere in the world, participating as troops of the UN and Regional Organizations of Security (NATO).

Terrorism continues to remain a major threat for peace, international security and world order. Fight against terrorism remains a priority that requires very high determination. This global threat may be prevented and dealt with using collective action, powerful response and mobilization of all the member states of the organization. We must testify to our nations that as a part of our responsibility, we shall stand resolute and united against terrorism. All together we must define the collective platform and strategy of victory in the war against terror by strengthening the international system and order. We appreciate the work of the Security Council and its respective Committees for their engagement and active support towards the member countries in effective application of SC resolutions against terrorism and especially 1269, 1373, 1540, and 1624. Albania remains completely engaged and very serious in the cooperation with the Security Council in this regard.

Albania appreciates the contribution of the Secretary General to the Middle East and the discussions in the effort to achieve a sustainable solution and accepted by all parties. Peoples have a desire to live in peace and the governments have an obligation to guarantee it. We support the restarted process of dialogue and hope that together with the international commitment the

Palestinians and the Israelis will undertake the necessary steps in direction of the achievement of stable peace in this important region.

Albania believes that the Alliance of Civilizations is a political means of the UN to promote peace, harmony among civilizations and to build an all inclusive society through education, understanding and mutual knowledge. As members of the “group of friends”, we shall be active because we believe in dialogue and contacts between different cultures, for the need to know and respect each other, at the necessity to defend the unique, as richness to the whole. The approved national strategy of the Inter-Cultural dialogue and the organization in January of this year in Tirana of the Inter-Religious Forum only enriches the current experience, but by participating in the Third Forum of the Alliance for Civilization, we think that a better job is needed to fight stereotypes and prejudice, as well as for the cohesion of modern multi-cultural societies.

Integration and membership of Albania into the European Union is a key priority of our foreign policy, where rarely has ever been a wider political and social consensus. The important steps taken by Albania towards the EU and the phases of cooperation under the framework of the process of integration are showing a lot of potential.

The end of this year promises to be decisive since we are close to two decisions of great importance such as the successful completion of the visa liberalization process with the EU and the achievement of the “candidate” status for EU membership. Albanians will be able to finally enjoy the real freedom for which they fought and sacrificed longer and much more than any European nation. The almost unanimous decision of the Commission of Foreign Policy of the European Parliament on the removal of visas with EU for Albania does not just makes us joyful, but also gives us more responsibility towards the engagements coming from the process.

We guarantee that the seriousness of which we completed the EU Questionnaire and the responsibility in relations with all European institutions and member countries of the EU will remain the motto of our engagement to earn the status of the candidate country in a nearest future.

Membership of Albania in NATO and integration into the European Union is an important and regional process, also inseparable from full integration of the region. We are of the opinion that every Western Balkan country is playing its part of the contribution and responsibility in the integration and emancipation of the region. I am happy to admit that the high level of cooperation in the region and the stage of political awareness show that the only way remains that of Euro-Atlantic integration. These are hopeful and promising times as the bitter past of this part of Europe will remain only as history. Albania and Albanians will continue to contribute to the stability, security and long term peace by encouraging not just integration policies of security and economic development, but also those of co-existence between countries, peoples and nations, cultures, traditions and their history.

Distinguished Colleagues,

A few days ago, precisely in this prominent chamber, as rarely ever happens, there was the approval of the resolution on the international legitimacy of proclamation of Kosovo independence, with wide consensus. This is a very important event for Kosova, Serbia, Western Balkans, United Europe and the Organization of the United Nations.

I express my gratitude for the engagement of all the international actors, especially of the European Union, that gave this resolution the contemporary philosophy and breath of Europe. EU showed its cohesion and the testimony that integration policies in our region are hopeful and unstoppable, as well as that the only way to unite with Europe is that of dialogue and cooperation between neighbor countries. Now that the matter of the status of Kosovo and its borders belongs to the past, thus a closed matter, it becomes relevant to begin the dialogue for practical issues.

We hope that this message sanctioned in the resolution will be put immediately to practice by these two independent countries. We support the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, which should start at once. We support the sincere and constructive dialogue for the solution of practical issues, in the interest of daily concerns of their citizens, to help them but also to facilitate and even calm the situation of respective minorities, Albanian and Serbian. It is time for the solution of problems and issues of representation, language, education, or others in the spirit and vision of the common European future.

Albania estimates that the consensual approval of this resolution is an important step in respect of the advisory opinion of the ICJ and the UN authority, but also for the consolidation of the state of Kosova and its democratic and European institutions, for its independence, integrity and its future as a member country of the United Nations.

Albania appreciates the work of the Security Council in its engagement towards the application of the UN Charter and international law, which are essential for peaceful co-existence and cooperation between member states in facing the common challenges, thus contributing to peace and international security.

The advisory opinion of the ICJ, legally verified that the independence of Kosova remains a “*sui generis*” case, unique, thus not to be a precedent for other situations in other countries. Today is the moment to prove with facts that we respect the UN and the values that have united us here today, today is the day to testify that we support its authority and its independent institutions, today is the occasion to accept the truth and to declare it loudly.

Today, we have the responsibility towards a country and a people that rightly wish to be among us and have given ample evidence that it truly deserves it.

I appeal to my distinguished colleagues, whose countries have not yet recognized the independence of Kosova, to recognize it, by ensuring that this is the only way to contribute to long term stability and peace, not just for the region but also globally.

In closing, Mr. President, I would like to confirm one more time that Albania is determined to continue its support towards the UN agenda and towards stronger functioning of the United Nations in all levels.

Thank you!