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Statement by

H.E. Ms. Jadranka Kosor
Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia

at the

General Debate of the
65th session of the General Assembly

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Mr. President,

First of all I would like to congratulate you on your election to this important function and stress that you can count on the full support of the Croatian delegation in the coming year. At the same time, I would like to thank Dr. Ali Abdussalm Treki for his successful work as president of the General Assembly in the past year and the results achieved.

Mr. President,

All the serious threats with which the modern world is faced, starting with terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, humanitarian crises and climate change, to mention just a few, in terms of their consequences go far beyond the original framework within which they began, and without exception are acquiring global proportions. In the same way, contemporary social and economic relationships have long grown far beyond the narrow national frameworks, and through the flow of people, goods, services and capital, are creating an unbreakable global network of mutual relations and influence. Does not the recent eruption of the volcano on Iceland testify to this in as vivid a manner as the joint humanitarian actions undertaken in response to recent terrifying natural disasters? This accelerated development of the contemporary world, and especially the challenges and threats to which it is exposed, require from all of us concerted action, joint responsibility and new solidarity.

In that vein, the subject you have proposed for discussion during the opening of the 65th session of the General Assembly in introducing the concept of global governance, undoubtedly reminds us of the role of this Assembly in forming the global response to the challenges placed before us by the contemporary world. At the same time, your proposal calls for an examination of our own contribution to the formulation of responses to these challenges.

Mr. President,

During its membership of the Security Council, Croatia promoted the ideas which are the backbone of all civilized governance and therefore also global governance: the importance of the rule of law and the protection and promotion of international law, especially human and minority rights, international humanitarian law and transparency in the work of the main bodies of the UN.

Within the rich legal heritage of the UN, the Millennium Declaration has particular significance. This document confirms the global strategy of the UN in areas crucial for the life and well-being of a large proportion of humankind and unites the activities of the relevant institutions in this sphere.

For Croatia, the implementation of the Millennium Goals is additionally important because of their strong link with the priorities related to the process of our accession to the European Union, which has entered the final phase. Croatia has decided to confirm its readiness to take part in the international activities aimed at realizing these goals by increasing its financial contribution to the programs and activities of the UN. In that context, allow me to mention the successful shift by the Republic of Croatia from a recipient to a provider of

international aid. Croatia has aimed its support at the neighboring region of south east Europe, where our knowledge and experience gained may be most useful to the recipient countries.

Along with the contribution of sending peace troops and police and military experts to 14 international missions led by the UN, NATO and the EU, Croatia is also ready to share its experience with states emerging from armed conflicts by offering expert advice and other services in the field of reform of the security and defense sector, and in the reintegration of demobilized persons into civilian society.

I would like to emphasize in particular how support in building peace for countries coming out of armed conflicts is one of the most important and most complex challenges before the UN. In that light, Croatia strongly supports the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, and the report which was drawn up by the co-facilitators of the process of revision of the architecture of the UN for building peace and the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. Croatia was an original member of the Peacebuilding Commission and in the desire to continue to make a contribution to the significant efforts in this area, it has announced that it is to be a candidate for membership of the Commission for the period from 2012 to 2013.

Mr. President,

However much our joint action at a global level is important to find responses to the many challenges, when it is a question of an attempt to find a deterrent to the use of nuclear weapons, this becomes imperative. Over the past years we have witnessed a renewed desire in the international community for a world without nuclear weapons. The Republic of Croatia also sees in that light the historical summit of the Security Council on the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, with President Barack Obama presiding in September last year.

Making its contribution to the significant efforts aimed at preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, in June this year the Republic of Croatia successfully organized a regional workshop on the implementation of UN Resolution 1540. Of course, in Croatia we are aware that mere words and adopted documents are not sufficient, especially to prevent the direct threat posed by the possibility of terrorists getting hold of weapons of mass destruction. We welcome therefore the concrete steps being taken by the nuclear states to reduce nuclear capacities and to increase the transparency and security of nuclear reserves. At the same time we call on all states to respect their commitments aimed at preventing attempts to allow these terrifying weapons to pass into the wrong hands.

At the same time, we must not forget that in parallel with the existence of a nuclear threat, the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons has taken human lives with merciless speed. Croatia most strongly condemns terrorism and is wholly dedicated to preventing this threat in all its various forms at a national, regional and global level. In an attempt to make a contribution to these efforts, during its time as member of the Security Council, Croatia for two years chaired the Counter Terrorism Committee. Under its presidency of the Security Council, in December 2008 Croatia organized a debate on the subject of "The threat to

international peace and security as the result of acts of terrorism". The Security Council then adopted the president's statement calling all members of the UN to show again the same level of solidarity they showed immediately after the tragic events of 11 September 2001.

Mr. President,

As a member of NATO and a future member of the European Union, Croatia is strongly engaged in securing peace and stability in south east Europe. This is also precisely the reason why we are advocating a clear Euro-Atlantic perspective for all the states in the neighboring region.

In realizing that perspective, it is necessary first of all to accept and fully apply the principles on which European integration itself was initiated 60 years ago, that is: cooperation, dialogue and mutual respect.

In that same spirit, Croatia and Slovenia last year agreed on a solution to their long-running border dispute through international arbitration. By my agreement with the Slovene Prime Minister, Borut Pahor, a new page was turned in Croatian-Slovene relations, but at the same time a way was opened for all the other countries of south east Europe to realize their right to a European future through dialogue and cooperation.

In that sense, I would like here to welcome the decision by the General Assembly to adopt by acclamation the Resolution on Kosovo, sponsored by Serbia and the European Union. This is the way in which a completely new European paradigm is created in south east Europe, of cooperation, peace and progress. Croatia will lead the way in supporting and promoting these values in the whole region, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which also has the right to an Euro-Atlantic perspective as a single state of three constitutive and equal peoples.

There is no real alternative to that kind of Euro-Atlantic future and any attempt to go back to the old and failed ways of the past would be extremely harmful.

Mr. President,

With this in mind, the Republic of Croatia is advocating the accepted concept of responsibility for the protection of civilians against genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. We are following and supporting with special attention and welcome the work of the International Criminal Court. In the same way, allow me to point out here that the Republic of Croatia supports the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the territory of the former Yugoslavia and welcomes the Tribunal's exit strategy.

Finally, this is an opportunity for me to say that the Republic of Croatia, in line with its focus so far on human rights, will continue its activities to protect them and promote them systematically. I especially welcome UN Women as an important and welcome novelty within the UN system, a body aimed at supporting gender equality and strengthening the position of women.

Mr. President,

Wisdom teaches us that “new wine is not poured into old wineskins”. Therefore, the global strategy of the UN, that is, the concept of global governance requires the comprehensive transformation of the United Nations itself. In that sense, the Republic of Croatia supports the systematic strengthening of the structure of the UN through the process of System-wide Coherence, and the comprehensive reform of the Security Council. In this process, it is vital to take into account all points of view in order to increase the transparency, responsibility and effectiveness of the UN.

To close, Mr. President, allow me to end this address with the assertion that all lasting and civilized governance, especially to the extent in which it includes the UN, must stem from the individual and return to the individual. The protection of the dignity of human life, and the dignity and identity of each nation, is the firm foundation on which the United Nations can fulfill its task to promote peace and security in today’s globalized world.

Thank you.