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البعثة الدائمة لمملكة البحرين
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STATEMENT

By

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The Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Before

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Mr. President,

At the outset, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you warmly, and through you your friendly country Uganda, upon your election as the President of the Sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. May I take this opportunity to wish you good luck and success in the noble mission with which you have been entrusted, and to affirm the Kingdom of Bahrain's support for your judicious proposal as regards the formulation and adoption of a post 2015 development plan, which will undoubtedly build up on what has already been achieved in terms of the Millennium Development Goals, for the wellbeing of all peoples.

I would be remiss if I did not commend your predecessor, H.E. Ambassador John Ashe, for his excellent management of the work of the 68th session and his outstanding efforts to conclude it with success.

We also greatly appreciate the efforts by H.E. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to enhance the Organization's role and to realize its objectives in all fields. I commend the report on the work of the Organization that he presented to the present session. The report demonstrates the daunting responsibility placed on the shoulders of our Organization for the creation of an environment conducive to finding appropriate solutions for the problems and challenges that we jointly face.

Mr. President,

The inaugural statement by the Secretary-General at the opening of the general debate shed light on a number of challenges including, notably, climate change, the spread of

diseases, particularly the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, the aggravated refugee problems, the propagation of extremism, policies of exclusion, violence, violation of human rights, particularly those of women, and problems related to health, education and food security. My country supports the Secretary-General's call for urgently to conclude a global climate-related agreement in the forthcoming Lima and Paris conferences, and wishes to stress the importance of the Green Climate Fund, designed to mitigate the effects of climate change.

It is a matter of particular pride for me to note the outstanding efforts undertaken by the Kingdom of Bahrain and the great achievements it has realized in the face of numerous challenges and the instability currently facing the region. We shall persevere in this drive to preserve the position of the Kingdom of Bahrain, classified by UNDP's Human Development Report (which is based on objective statistical criteria among which the most important are health care, education, per capita income and non discrimination against women) in the category of "*countries with very high human development*"; a status achieved through hard and continuous work. These goals, however, have never been an end in themselves, for the principal objective is to achieve the wellbeing of the Bahraini citizens and to protect all those who live in the territory of the Kingdom; that oasis of security and coexistence enjoyed by all without discrimination.

I am pleased to recall in this context the Award given to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, King of Bahrain, by the *Foundation for Ethnic Understanding* in recognition of His Majesty's outstanding contributions in the field of dialogue among civilizations and cultures. A conference on "Dialogue among Civilizations in the Service of Humanity" was held in Manama in early May, under the high patronage of His Majesty the King, and with the participation of the United Nations and distinguished group of thinkers, scholars and opinion leaders. It issued the "Bahrain Declaration" which

has been circulated as an official document of the United Nations. Equally, I would like here to refer to His Majesty's initiative to establish an Arab Human Rights Tribunal which was approved by all Member States of the League of Arab States and whose statute has been adopted. I also wish to underline the launching of the UN World Water Report in the Kingdom of Bahrain in November 2013 which called for the adoption of a joint Arab strategy in the field of water.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has always endeavored to be a dynamic member of the United Nations system, pursuing progress towards gradual and steady reform along the lines of the reform and modernization vision of His Majesty the King, a vision based on a strategy of common denominators between all, continuous and open dialogue and national exchange of views without restrictions. This contributed to the early achievement of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and the strategies and preparations for the post-2015 stage through tireless work, and with the same determination, persistence, good faith and comprehensive planning aimed at enhancing continuous and advanced progress and serving the interest of citizens and residents alike.

Mr. President,

Our region is going through a phase of extreme difficulty, if not the most difficult in its modern history, in which a climate of instability, chaos, tension and savage, bloody and unprecedented terrorism prevails. Contributing to this are many factors, most prominent among which are the following challenges:

The first challenge, is the accelerated emergence of terrorist groups, with various global dimensions and affiliations. They thrive in our region with greater savagery and callousness. Not only do they target innocent people in general but also aggravate their

inhumane practices by mass murder, public beheadings and the persecution of ethnic and religious minorities, displacing them and destroying their cultural and civilizational heritage, depriving them of their religious freedom and their homes, attacking entire cities, and declaring war on sovereign countries in their regional and international settings, in disregard of all religious doctrines or intrinsic human nature, under which human civilizations, including our Arab and Islamic civilization, coexisted consistent with values of tolerance, equality, moderation and respect for cultural diversity. These terrorist groups destroy Islamic values under the pretext of Islam, to which they are totally alien. Terrorist sectarian groups such as Qaida, ISIL and the terrorist Hezbollah along with its extensions and counterparts, recruit fighters from East and West to perpetrate horrific terrorist acts. The young and the old are killed, women are taken as war bounty, families are displaced and privacy is violated, the objective being to undermine security, propagate anarchy and topple regimes.

Therefore, combating terrorist groups requires us to work together along three major axes. First, the security and military axis, following the aggravation of the threat posed by these terrorist groups as they acquire heavy weapons, enabling them to occupy cities that they use as safe haven and base from which they launch their terrorist operations endangering the stability and security of our region. Hence, our common responsibility with sisterly countries and our allies to eradicate the terrorist group of ISIL. To this end, our air force, in collaboration with these countries, has targeted a number of ISIL positions. We welcome Security Council resolution 2178, adopted on September 24th, 2014 which focuses on stopping the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters and in this context we continue to closely monitor frontiers and outlets so as to stop citizens of the Kingdom from contacting terrorist groups or joining them, and to arrest and prosecute all those who have allegedly been affiliated to them as soon as they return to the country.

The second axis is fighting the ideology that deforms human nature, diverts true Islam from its essence and disfigures its principles. Hence the importance of the role of Muslim clerics and scholars to counteract such a misguided thought. We call on all Muslim scholars to disown and incriminate those ideas that are not related to Islam in any way and we appreciate their leading role in this respect. It is imperative to stand together in the face of the ideas propagated by those terrorist groups.

The third axis is the financial axis as it constitutes the lifeline for those terrorist groups, enabling them to perpetrate their barbaric acts. Based on this, the Kingdom of Bahrain is convening a high-level international conference during the first week of this November to examine the financing of terrorism, how best to combat it and how to drain its sources of finance. We firmly believe that ending the financing of terrorism is half the battle of defeating and annihilating.

Mr. President,

The second challenge to the security and stability of our region is represented by political expansionism, and attempts to impose hegemony in disregard of the sovereignty of states and to interfere in their internal affairs. All the countries of the region, without exception, have suffered from this as a result of attempts to export seditious revolutions and to train terrorists in violation of international law and the principles of the United Nations. Such attempts represent an ideology that is archaic in its political dimension, and in its defiance of the values and principles consecrated by numerous international instruments.

One form of such interference is the use of media, notably satellite television channels and social media which are misused in order to distort facts and to cause instability in the

region. We condemn these illegal and illegitimate practices which contradict international values and principles.

I would like to point out what the Republic of Yemen is enduring. With each step it takes forward, terrorist groups rush to pursue their criminal objectives by undermining stability and security. The Kingdom of Bahrain reaffirms its support to H.E. President Abdou Rabbou Mansour Hadi and his strenuous efforts to consolidate the national consensus reached through a comprehensive national dialogue, based on the GCC initiative and relevant Security Council resolutions.

Turning to Iraq, a country that has suffered from flagrant interference, insecurity, hegemony and anarchy, we see some hope in the positive developments in that country, and we are pleased to welcome the election of His Excellency President Fouad Massoum and the formation of the new government under Prime Minister Dr. Haidar Abbadi. We hope this step will enhance the political and developmental processes and consequently contribute to the consolidation of the security and stability of Iraq, the preservation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the enhancement of its links with its fellow Arabs in the region where it naturally belongs.

In Syria, the conflict becomes more complex and more acute year after year. Innocent civilians pay the ultimate price and lose their lives, property and dignity. The humanitarian situation deteriorates day after day in the absence of a comprehensive political solution to preserve the lives of the Syrian people and extract this beloved country from its long agony through a comprehensive political process aimed at achieving reform and political plurality. As regards the humanitarian aspect, we reiterate that it is necessary to remove all barriers that stand in the way of delivering humanitarian assistance to those in need, in conformity with relevant Security Council resolutions. In

this respect, I wish to express my country's great appreciation for the sisterly Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for hosting and delivering assistance to Syrian refugees . We also appreciate the humanitarian role played by Turkey and Lebanon as well as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Concerning the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Kingdom of Bahrain welcomes the democratic development that has taken place there and the implementation of the road map by issuing a constitution that reflects the will of the Egyptian people. We also welcome the holding of presidential elections and the ongoing preparations to hold legislative elections in completion of the constitutional institutions of the state. The Kingdom of Bahrain reiterates its total rejection of any interference in the internal affairs of Egypt and supports the efforts deployed by H.E. President Abdelfattah Alsissi and the steps he has taken to combat terrorism, preserve the security and stability of Egypt and pursue its strategic and active role at the Arab, regional and international levels. In this regard I also wish to commend the initiative taken by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Ibn Abdel Aziz Al Saud, King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in announcing the convening of Egypt's economic summit with a view to supporting Egypt and its economic development.

We reiterate the historic, principled and constant stance of the Kingdom of Bahrain in solidarity with the Kingdom of Morocco and our full support for its initiatives concerning self-government for Moroccan Sahara within Moroccan sovereignty and territorial integrity, in conformity with international legitimacy.

With regard to Libya, the Kingdom of Bahrain wishes to express its grave concern at the deterioration of the security situation as a result of the violent acts perpetrated by terrorist groups, and their repercussions on the stability of neighbouring countries. The Kingdom

of Bahrain supports the legitimate constitutional institutions represented by the elected House of Representatives and also welcomes the formation of the new government headed by Mr. Adullah Al-Thani, hoping that this will help to establish security and stability and preserve the unity and territorial integrity of Libya.

In view of our keen interest in working hard to achieve our principal goal which is to keep humanity from the scourges of wars, conflicts and disasters, and to reject attempts of hegemony and destabilization, we reiterate our call to make the Middle East, including the Arab Gulf region, a region free of weapons of mass destruction, notably nuclear weapons. Based on this principle, we support the efforts of the 5+1 group with a view to reaching a swift solution to the Iranian Nuclear programme, consistent with the provisions of the Non-proliferation Treaty and the Convention on Nuclear Safety, without prejudice to use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes which is a natural right for all states within the international system of safeguards.

Mr. President,

The third challenge is the illegal occupation of other states' territories in contradiction of the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter, as is evidenced by the violations committed by Israel against all international laws, conventions, and decisions and its targeting the Palestinian people by confiscating their land, building or expanding settlements therein and imposing blockades on them. These violations found their ugliest expression in the latest criminal aggression against the Gaza Strip which resulted in tremendous damage and caused the death of more than 2000 martyrs, the displacement of a great number of Palestinians and the destruction of infrastructure. It gives me pleasure to recall here the words of H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas, in his statement before the General Assembly, and his request that international protection be

provided to the Palestinian people and their territories under occupation and demanding that Israel abide by the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. It is imperative to have a specific time frame to end Israeli occupation and to realize the aspirations of the Palestinian people for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on all its territory within the boundaries of June 4th 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital as stipulated in the Arab Peace Initiative and the two-states solution as well as international legitimacy and relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

In this context we commend the pivotal role played by the Arab Republic of Egypt to reach a cease fire in Gaza. We greatly appreciate its hosting, in collaboration with the Kingdom of Norway, of the International Conference of support to Palestine and reconstruction of the Gaza Strip next month, and appreciate as well the great role played by UNRWA.

Concerning the occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the three islands (Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa) belonging to the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain reiterates its consistent position of rejecting this occupation, and calls on Iran to heed the efforts of the United Arab Emirates to solve the problem through direct negotiations or through arbitration by the International Court of Justice.

Mr. President,

Those were the key challenges facing our region. If we overcome them, it would be relatively easy for us, within our common responsibilities, to address the international challenges that were dealt with in the Secretary-General's statement to which I referred to at the beginning of my statement. If we concentrate on these very serious issues, we will

be on the right path of genuine sustainable development and the required reform that will meet the aspirations of all peoples

Ladies gentlemen,

Notwithstanding the challenges we all face together, the Kingdom of Bahrain will always remain committed to its march on the path of development, reform and positive interaction with the international community with a view to achieving our aspirations and objectives. In this respect, the Kingdom of Bahrain, in line with its solid approach to reform under the leadership of His Majesty the King, will hold its fourth legislative and municipal elections next month, to consolidate its achievements and build for a better future.

In conclusion, Mr. President,

Our choices in the Kingdom of Bahrain are clear, our vision comprehensive and our strategy complementary to and interactive with our Gulf, Arab and international contexts. The Kingdom always seeks to promote stability, peace, security, development, and the protection of human rights. It rejects and condemns terrorism, violence and hatred and works for a society in which harmony and consensus prevail for the interest of all and for the establishment of a promising future full of opportunities and achievements for future generations.