

**STATEMENT**  
**by H.E. Dr. Elmar Mammadyarov**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan,**  
**at the General Debate of the 60th Session of the General Assembly**  
**New York, September 18, 2005**

Mr. President,

At the outset I would like to congratulate Mr. Jan Eliasson on his election to the post of the President of the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly and wish him every success and new achievements at this highly responsible post.

I would like also to express our appreciation to his predecessor Mr. Jean Ping for his competence and dedication by which he guided the work of the 59th session of the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

While it is early to assess the impact of 2005 World Summit Outcome adopted at the High Level Plenary Meeting, I will dare to argue that the path leading to that was thorny, if not challenging at a time.

Azerbaijan has always been and will remain adhered to the purposes, principles and values enshrined in the UN Charter and other landmark documents. Respect to the norms and principles of international law and diligent observance of international obligations by the Member States serve as the indicators of their adherence to these values and principles.

Azerbaijan is fully supportive to the collective security approach. All of us resolve to take concerted actions, based on the UN Charter, to remove threats to peace and security, foster sustainable economic development and support the democracy-building and protection of human rights.

We reaffirm our determination to continue the reforms that will eventually improve the United Nations' functional capacity and decision-making process, especially as regards crisis and conflict management.

Mr. President,

Since our accession to the United Nations, this Organization has been closely associated in our society with the hopes for liberation of the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia. Although the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is strongly involved in the settlement process, prompt reaction of the United Nations Security Council in response to the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and adoption of four resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 still generates optimism for peaceful settlement of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The principles unanimously adopted by the Security Council in those resolutions continue to be the basis for the settlement of the conflict.

Last year consideration by the General Assembly of the agenda item entitled "The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" played a crucial role in attracting attention to the dangerous practices carried out by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

As for the negotiation process itself, I must admit that we are now at a critical juncture where the chances for resolution of the conflict are cautiously optimistic. The Government of Azerbaijan remains committed to the peaceful settlement of this protracted conflict, based on the respect for the norms and principles of international law, the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the OSCE documents and decisions.

We expect that the Armenian side will proceed from the similar constructive approach and will not miss this window of opportunity.

There should be no place for illusions: Azerbaijan will never compromise its territorial integrity. Only the

return of all the occupied territories back to Azerbaijan will help restore our trust and confidence in Armenia and its declared intentions on the establishment of good neighborly relations with Azerbaijan. Such a step will relieve the Government of Armenia from a label of aggressor inherited after occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and will provide for both parties the opportunities to be brought by the settlement of the conflict.

We are ready to provide the security assurances for the Armenian population of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. As for the status of the region, it is necessary to create favorable conditions for the secure and dignified return of the expelled Azerbaijani population to the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories, to establish there normal living conditions and to provide opportunities for economic development for both communities.

Once the agreement is achieved, both for political and legal guarantees of its implementation we will need the support of the international community for the deployment of the multinational peacekeeping forces, demining, restoration of communications, rehabilitation of lands, as well as the provision of security guarantees for the population in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, including the creation of local police forces in the region for both Armenian and Azerbaijani communities.

Last, but not least point on the conflict resolution. It is the issue of communication of the Armenians living in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan with Armenia and that of the Azerbaijanis living in the Nakhchivan region of Azerbaijan with the rest of the country. We suggest the using of the so-called Lachin corridor - which should be called "Road of Peace" - by both sides in both directions provided that security of this road will be ensured by the multinational peacekeeping forces at the initial stage.

Importance of this road extends beyond the practical benefits of direct transport communications between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It should be considered, first of all, as the path leading to peace and cooperation in the South Caucasus region.

Today, from this high rostrum, after the recent meeting of the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia held in Kazan on August 26, 2005, I urge the Armenian side not to loose this chance and to advance the negotiation process with the assistance of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmen in accordance with the key understandings reached within the Prague process.

Mr. President,

Azerbaijan believes that development reinforces the democratic transformation, rule of law and respect for human rights. We share the urgency and importance of achieving the international development agenda. The Millennium Development Goals remain indispensable part of that agenda and represent scales of the States' contribution to and impact on the global efforts in their quest for a better life.

The cooperation in the areas of debt, aid and trade can open up new opportunities for financing for development and reinforce the national efforts to mobilize needed resources. In this course, special development needs of Africa deserve a serious attention, therefore Azerbaijan welcomes the recent decision of the G-8 Governments to cancel the debt of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries.

We also consider the official development assistance to be an important investment towards self-sustained development. We firmly believe that for aid to be effective a greater interagency coordination at all levels is required and the UN Development Group and UN Resident Coordinator have a critical role to play in this field. We fully support the strengthening of both structures.

Yet another area requiring an increased cooperation is international trade. Addressing the issues related to improving market access and terms of trade as well as overcoming supply-side constraints can revive the Doha Round.

Azerbaijan believes that 2005 World Summit will reinvigorate a sense of urgency to put in place the highest political will and coherent policy approach for shaping more favorable multilateral trade system during the forthcoming WTO Ministerial Meeting in Hong-Kong. In the meantime, we believe that the development challenges of Landlocked Developing Countries should be effectively addressed, bearing in mind recently adopted Asuncion Platform for Action.

We recognize a crucial role of regional organizations, including UN regional commissions in enhancing regional cooperation for sustainable development. Azerbaijan places an emphasis on development of trans-

regional transport and communication lines and makes its contribution through the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum natural gas pipeline. We also look forward to realization of a new Baku-Tbilisi-Akhalkalaki-Kars railroad project.

Azerbaijan is committed to eradication of poverty and has identified this as an overarching goal in its development strategies. Although we are encouraged by implementation perspectives presented in the Millennium Project Report, we highlight a need for assistance complementing the efforts of national leadership, especially in the areas of capacity-building, science and technology, environmental protection.

Achievement of MDGs requires not only public investments in infrastructure and human capital, but also investments in improving governance, which include efficient, properly resourced and adequately staffed institutional system, as well as political accountability, transparency and participation. Azerbaijan attaches particular importance to the advancements in this area. In recognition of the central role of good governance in poverty reduction and development, we have formulated extra national MDGs to address governance issues. The specific targets under this goal include, inter alia, the reform of the overall state system of public administration, legislation and policies by the year 2015.

By recognizing the destructive effect of natural disasters to sustainable development of countries and communities, Azerbaijan as a disaster-prone country believes that efforts aimed at disaster mitigation should place particular emphasis on awareness raising programs, as well as on development of early warning capacities.

It is clear that national ownership in design, implementation and coordination of humanitarian response and transition programs in both post-disaster and post-conflict situations is essential to ensure the desired impact of those programs and their sustainability. However, there is a need for an efficient burden sharing between national authorities and international humanitarian and development actors, in particular in protracted humanitarian situations with mass displacement and limited national capacities to tackle all existing problems. Humanitarian assistance and funding should not be limited to providing immediate response to crisis, but must take into account long term needs in transition phase.

Promoting human rights and rule of law has been an integral part of our national development strategy out of conviction that the full enjoyment of human rights, while a goal in itself, serves as a foundation for sustainable development. We need to increase our ability to deal with human rights challenges and to adequately respond to them, in particular in times of conflict and crises.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to assure you that Azerbaijan will continue to remain committed to the ideals which lay the foundation of this Organization and to express confidence that at this critical threshold of multilateralism the international community will spare no efforts to make the United Nations more efficient and relevant to the needs of its Member States.

Thank you.