



Statement by

H.E. Mr. Geir H. Haarde
Minister of Finance
and
Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs and
External Trade of Iceland

at the

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the General Assembly of the United Nations

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

It is with great pleasure that I congratulate you on your election as President of the 59th Session of the General Assembly.

We are living in trying and turbulent times. As we meet, the world continues to be haunted by the spectre of terrorism, as most recently evidenced in Russia and Iraq. The victims are as always the innocent. The objective is global insecurity and instability, leading to increased intolerance and social regression. The hideousness of the means employed by terrorists exposes them for what they are. No just political cause can be served by such acts. The war against terrorism is a struggle against barbarism. The perpetrators of terror must be rooted out and their bases and networks destroyed. This

years on increasing the number of non-permanent and permanent seats must reach a conclusion.

It is time that certain countries which have long made a considerable contribution to the work of the UN be given permanent seats on the Security Council. I am referring here, for example, to Germany, India, Japan and Brazil. But it is no less important to ensure that Africa also be given a permanent seat on the Council.

Mr. President,

Smaller states make up the vast majority of UN members. Ensuring that smaller states are adequately represented in the various organs of the UN is not only a matter of paying due regard to the principles of sovereignty. It is also a practical matter of ensuring that the particular challenges faced by smaller states, both island states and others, are taken account of in the multilateral system. Iceland knows the problems of being far away from potential markets. We know well the struggle of small economies to diversify, and we have direct experience of the vulnerability of small countries to external economic shocks and natural disasters. I would like to use this opportunity to extend our sympathy to all those Caribbean states which have suffered so much in the recent hurricanes. My Government is considering ways in which it could contribute to disaster relief or reconstruction.

Just

preparation for the Major Summit in 2005. It is clear that the international community must speed up its efforts in order to achieve before 2015 the goals set by the Millennium

challenges to the rebuilding of the country continue to be faced. Iceland has demonstrated its support and taken over the leading role in the running of the Kabul International airport under the auspices of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

An area of continuing concern is of course the Middle East. The Icelandic Government continues to call on Israel and the Palestinian Authority to resume negotiations on a political settlement. The Roadmap lays down a realistic way to achieve a two-State solution. Iceland fully supports the efforts of the Quartet. We urge the Quartet and all other well intentioned parties to continue to focus on this issue.

Mr. President,

I concentrated at the start of my address on terrorism. Terrorism is an assault on human rights. I would like to express strong support for the initiative by the Secretary-General urging member states to ratify all those conventions which concern protection of the rights of the ordinary citizen.

In conducting the war against terrorism we must protect the human rights which terrorists themselves flout. We must be sure that human rights and humanitarian law are not sacrificed. I would like to refer here to the key role played by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the entire Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, in monitoring the application of the Geneva Conventions and auh 0 0 1 1t2l Tjzpress Tj1 0 0 1 120 465