

The Role of the International Organizations in Today's Globalized World

or

The Future of the United Nations

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have been asked to speak today on the future of the United Nations .But with your permission I would like to tackle this problem a little wider and to discuss also the role of the UN and some European organizations in today's globalized world. Though there exist more than 380 public and approximately 4700 private international organizations, the main actors of the multilateral diplomacy on the world scene are only a few. Among them the United Nations is unquestionably the number one.

The United Nations was created to be a collective security system to ensure that the horrors of the two World Wars were never repeated.

Today, more than sixty years later we see that biggest security threats go far beyond States waging aggressive war. They extend to poverty, infectious diseases, environmental degradation, bad governments, civil conflicts, the proliferation of nuclear, radiological, chemical, and biological weapons, international terrorism and transnational organized crime.

The prime goal of the United Nations since its inception is maintaining peace and international security as well as promotion of international economic and social development, respect for human rights for all people, and the rule of law.

In its 60 years the United Nations has contributed a lot to fulfill these goals. But the time has changed. The preoccupation of the United Nations with state security alone is not enough. The people of the world expect much more from the United Nations. They need not only State security but also human security, indivisibility of international security, economic development, human freedom and democracy. They expect from the United Nations to be more effective and efficient instrument for forging a united, collective response to shared threats and shared needs of the mankind.

But events of recent years, as Secretary General Kofi Annan admits in his 2005 Annual Report "led to declining public confidence in the United Nations, especially after the attacks on 9/11 on New York and Pentagon. One of them is related to the Security Council approach to the Iraq war. Most of the others are connected with institutional weaknesses of the United Nations entities and performance of them. The United Nations institutions too often have failed to meet expectations of people.

The report of the High-Level-Panel of sixteen eminent persons appointed by the Secretary General of the United Nations and distributed on 2 December 2004 has identified seven important weaknesses of the United Nations including:

- Loss of vitality by the General Assembly;
- The Security Council will need to be proactive in the future;
- A major institutional gap in addressing countries under stress and countries emerging from conflict

- The Security Council has not made the most of the potential advantages of working with regional and sub-regional organizations;
- There must be new institutional arrangements to address the economic and social threats to international security;
- There is a need for a more professional and better organized Secretariat.

During recent years a lot has been done to address these weaknesses and to revitalize the United Nations as well as to fight injustice and inequalities, international terror and crime, and to protect environment on our globe. I would like only to mention decisions contained in the United Nations' Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) as well as recommendations in the above mentioned Report of the High-Level-Panel.

Those decisions and recommendations were developed during long months of talks and consultations reflecting the views of world leaders, scholars and interested people.

Poland has contributed also to these efforts. During the debates in the General Assembly in 2003 Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs presented our views on renewal of the United Nations. These ideas were later developed in a comprehensive draft of a New Political Act for the United Nations.

We were of the view that the most practical way to improve the functioning of the United Nations is making use of those United Nations' Charter provisions which have still retained their full validity and adding specific modifications that respond to the requirements of the day. We underlined the need for respect of the international law, including, in particular, binding treaties on arms control and disarmament, humanitarian law, human law and environmental protection. There is an urgent need to prevent any disintegration of international law into the law of the strongest. We decisively advocated also enhancing the role of preventive diplomacy with a view to averting disputes and conflicts.

We expressed our opinion that unless the United Nations undergoes a thorough reform, it may not be able to meet the great demands it faces in the service of mankind. In particular we presented ideas and suggestions with a view to increasing the efficiency of the United Nations in solving current international problems including the reform of the Security Council and restoration of its role in world affairs. The reform should strengthen decision-making, implement multilateral arrangements, improve United Nations ability to undertake collective action and resist unilateral tendencies to use force without Security Council authorization.

In our view two amendments to the United Nations Charter in honoring Article 23 seem to be most relevant: the enlargement of the Security Council and a considerable restriction of the right to veto.

The composition of the Security Council should reflect both the political changes since the World War II and the contribution of the States to the activity of the United Nations. It would be vital and logical to increase the number of permanent seats on the Council by one State each from Asia, Africa, Latin America as well as by Japan and Germany.

The Polish draft of a New Political Act for the United Nations suggested also that pending the crucial decisions concerning the right to a humanitarian intervention there should be elaborated specific criteria to subordinate the use of force to rules of international law. Only the Security Council should be authorized to allow the use of force in situations constituting "any threat to the peace, break of peace, or act of aggression". It has drawn attention also to the fact that the United Nations has become considerably inefficient because of its practices of multiplying and overlapping mandates and programs often without security financial resources.

I am very pleased to say that many of our recommendations and suggestions have been reflected and incorporated in the Report of High-Level-Panel and in the 2005 World Summit Outcome .But I regret, however, that the Outcome contains much less than many of us have expected. For example, neither arms control nor non-proliferation issues are covered by it. Though I am not fully satisfied with the Summit Outcome document, I am glad that it offers many substantial ideas and very useful recommendations which will make the United Nations a better institution.

It was my privilege also that during the Millennium Summit in September 2000 and at the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the Sixtieth Session of the United Nations' General Assembly last year I was entrusted to Chair the Round Tables. In particular I was impressed by the last year Round Table debate. The 26 world leaders and representatives of the United Nations entities emphasized that multilateralism was the only way to respond to the challenges and threats of the increasingly interdependent and globalized age of twenty first century. These leaders made a remarkable call to make the World Summit the summit of solidarity, the summit of responsibility in broader partnership for development, the summit of the individual, with progress of human rights and the new Human Right Council and the summit of courage to accelerate reform of the United Nations.

I would like to add that globalization and effective multilateralism should be seen as key elements of the new international order.

Globalization takes place in the age of collapsing walls. Some of these walls separated us from what was good, but others separated us from evil. We have to build the twenty first century's civilization on a solid foundation of good universal values enshrined in the United Nations' Charter: freedom, security, democracy and solidarity. At the same time the United Nations and all States should show greater determination in response to difficult problems such as violence, poverty, social exclusion, terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Poland works in the United Nations not alone but now as a member of NATO and the European Union. From both organizations we draw our strength and determination. As a new member Poland tries to contribute as much as possible to the common policy of the European Union. I am very glad that the European commitment towards multilateralism is clearly at the center of the European Union external policies. In 2003 the European Commission adapted a Communication on "EU-UN relations. The choice of multilateralism", which focused on a comprehensive strengthening of EU-UN relations. Effective multilateralism is also one of the central pillars of the European Security Strategy adapted in December 2003.

The European Union relations with the United Nations translates also into significant contributions to the United Nations system. European Union Member States provide around 38% of the United Nations' regular budget and around 50% of all United Nations Member States contributions to United Nations' funds and programs.

Intensified EU-UN cooperation extends also to conflict prevention and crisis management. The European Union's Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina which took over from the United Nations task force, as well as the MONUC the UN peace-keeping force took-over from the European Union military operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

An overall cooperation extends to exchange of information, coordination of activities and priorities as well as contacts at all levels, including implementation of conflict prevention and peace building.

The European Union using its own experience contributes also greatly in promoting democracy in the world. It believes that democracy is the best guarantor of peace, stability and prosperity in any country and any region. Democratic societies, where the rule of law operates and human rights are respected are stabler and more secure societies. They are also more open to international cooperation.

Stability, security and openness are essential for trade and inward investment that bring economic development and prosperity. In a globalized world it is crucial to all countries. European Union promoting democracy is not only motivated by solidarity but also by its own interest in trade and investments.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Among the influential regional organizations in Europe important role is played also by the Council of Europe. Today Europe is guided by political philosophy of inclusion and complementarity and by common commitment to multilateralism based on international law.

The main task of the Council of Europe is to preserve and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950.

The Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe while meeting in Warsaw last May has outlined the important action plan laying down principle tasks of the Council for coming years. It includes: promoting common fundamental values; human rights, rule of law and democracy, strengthening the security of European citizens, fostering cooperation with other international and European organizations and institutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Among all international organizations the United Nations is; however, the only institution which is in a position to respond effectively to the needs of today's world.

The last five years have proven that the United Nations, with all its weaknesses but getting guidance and support from member-states, can do what it ought to do, and it can lead all the world's peoples to find common solutions to their common problems.

We need the United Nations because we have to move on multiple fronts at once. As the late Pope John Paul II said in his address to the UN General Assembly more than twenty years ago (5 October 1995) "The United Nations Organization needs to raise more and more above the cold status of an administration institution and to become a moral center where all the nations of the world feel at home and develop a shared awareness of being as it were a "family of nations".

To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war we have to move beyond peacekeeping or military and political matters. We have to deal with economic matters and development to fight poverty.

We have to respond to the broad range of human rights challenges facing the international community.

There is an urgent need to further strengthen the United Nations counter-terrorism strategy to contribute to international counter-terrorism efforts.

The rule of law should also be a central part of the work of the United Nations especially of the Peace-building Commission. It should go together with promotion of democracy.

There are many other issues and threats like spreading diseases, environmental degradation, bad governments and civil conflicts which should be address at once if we would like to make progress.

The task to reform the United Nations is also not over yet. We need the United Nations to meet the challenges of our time and to be a forum where all states can meet and find solutions to their common problems. Today, no state, no matter how powerful, cannot be alone with its problem. It needs partners and international cooperation.

Dag Hammarskjold speaking to the Foreign Policy Association in New York observed: “The United Nations was not created to take humanity to heaven but to save it from hell”.