



**Statement of
The Arab Republic of Egypt**

Before

**The Sixty-Sixth Session
of the United Nations General Assembly**

Delivered by

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Mr. President,

It gives me pleasure to extend our congratulations to the brotherly state of Qatar, and to you personally, for assuming the presidency of the General Assembly in its sixty-six session. I am confident that your wise leadership of its proceedings will contribute to the attainment of the ambitions and aspirations we seek. I also congratulate the Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, for his re-election for a second term, and reiterate our support to him as he strives to realize the purposes & principles of the Charter.

Mr. President,

I proudly stand before you today representing Egypt in a new era and with a novel face.

Egypt as it heads from an era that faded to one whose features are emerging.

Egypt as it embarks on a new phase regarded by all Egyptians as auspicious and full of promises.

The Egyptian people came out in masses on the 25th of January calling for democratic reforms and a strengthened respect of human rights, fundamental freedoms and social justice.

The Egyptian masses wanted to implant the seeds of a brighter future deep in the arid lands of reality, for their sake and for the benefit of the future generations of Egyptians.

The masses obtained what they sought and were able to impose their words and enforce their will.

They were backed by the understanding and support of the Egyptian armed forces who truly exemplify genuine patriotism and unity with the people of our nation. The stance of our armed forces will be remembered by history. It is consistent with their core doctrine as guardian of the nation not of a political regime and in line with an institution that is first and foremost loyal to the people who rallied around their armed forces and expressed their appreciation.

An ideal situation made possible by circumstances that can rarely be repeated. Circumstances that enabled the Egyptians to alter the face of their country in a historic and wonderful way. Egyptians wanted to rapidly catch up with other countries that had already made great strides in achieving political pluralism and the alternation of power, in upholding & applying the rule of law, in relentlessly fighting corruption in its various forms and in providing equal opportunities to its youth to allow them to realize their aspirations and ambitions of decent lives.

I am addressing you today whilst Egypt moves forward determined to complete the transition phase that arose from that remarkable transformative change. It is witnessing, over the past few months and since the revolution took place, new internal dynamics and a wide national debate involving all segments of the society and covering all issues on the national agenda, on top of which are those related to the drafting of a new constitution and the organization of the upcoming legislative and presidential elections... so as to increase the prospects of success of the transitional phase and initiate a solid political process that corresponds to the aspirations of the people and is commensurate with Egypt's unique standing in the region and worldwide. A process that would culminate in the handing of power to an elected civilian authority.

Mr. President,

Egypt is honored to assume the chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement since July of 2009. The start of this session of the General Assembly coincides with the commemoration held to mark fifty years since the first summit of the Movement took place and celebrate its significant contributions to the reinforcement of our international efforts to preserve international peace and security and achieve development to the peoples of the world, in a changing international environment and in the face of multiple challenges. This commemoration comes after a series of important events organized by the Movement to promote greater involvement of developing countries in the governance of international institutions and to ensure a fair participation in the process of international norms setting and decision making in the political, economic and social fields.

On that basis, and to that end, the Egyptian chairmanship of the Movement has undertaken numerous activities to strengthen the Movement's capacity to effectively respond to the new and continuous international changes. The Movement has also played a vital role in coordinating the positions of its member states regarding the various issues comprising the international agenda, including those related to disarmament, collective security, the reform of the United Nations and the promotion of the international ideals of democracy and the respect of human rights.

During its chairmanship of the Movement, Egypt seeks to reinforce the Joint Coordinating Committee with the Group of 77 and China. In light of an international work agenda loaded with issues, ideas and initiatives, we set to put back the issue of development with its various dimensions as the top priority of the United Nations and together we adopted a number of important initiatives in the field of food security, the empowerment of women and the fight against human trafficking. We will pursue these efforts until we hand over the Chairmanship of the Movement to the country holding its next presidency in the summer of 2012.

I reiterate here today the support of the Non-Aligned Movement to the historical struggle of the brotherly Palestinian people to regain their legitimate rights as well as the Movement's support to the efforts exerted towards declaring the establishment of the independent State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital and its admission as a full member of the United Nations. I also must call upon the countries that have not yet recognized the State of Palestine to do so as a contribution to the efforts aimed at achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the conflict in the Middle East, based on the two states solution.

Mr. President,

The Non-Aligned Movement believes that there is a pressing need for a comprehensive and substantial reform of the United Nations so as to strengthen its ability to positively respond to the international challenges, to live up to the aspirations of the peoples and to cope with the radical changes that have altered the shape and composition of the international community... so that the United Nations becomes a true reflection of the realities of today's world.

Such a reform will not be achieved unless the Security Council is reformed and is made more representative, more transparent, and more reflective of the democratic nature of multilateralism. Inevitably, major steps must be taken to end the monopoly by permanent members over the decision making process in the council and to put an end to the historical injustice inflicted upon Africa as a result of its non representation in the permanent membership category as well as its inadequate representation in the non permanent membership category in spite of the increasing support of member states for the African position. In the same context, the states members of the Movement demand the continuation of efforts aiming at revitalizing the role of the General Assembly and strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council.

The states members of the Non-Aligned Movement reaffirm also the need for the international community to support the efforts exerted by developing countries to implement their development plans aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals through an enabling international environment that bolsters the efforts of realizing the comprehensive economic and social development and the fulfillment by all developed countries of their financing for development commitments, as well as achieving more balanced international economic relations and establishing a more just international trade system that takes into account the developmental needs of the countries of the developing world.

Mr. President,

We can only but feel deep sorrow every time we realize that historical injustice has been for decades inflicted on a people while the whole world has so far failed to lift it. The just question of Palestine still remains after two full decades of fruitless negotiations without the desired settlement, and the Palestinian people remains to this day deprived of acquiring their legitimate fundamental rights, on top of which their right in acquiring freedom and establishing their own independent state on the basis of the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital.

This is the very state for which the Palestinian President presented yesterday a request for membership of the United Nations after serious and just efforts towards a final settlement have stalled, and after all the possibilities of achieving any significant progress in the negotiating process dwindled, especially since the other party insists on keeping the negotiating process forever open. We have witnessed yesterday another failure by the Quartet to come up with a balanced vision to achieve the goal that we all know and approve of yet differ on how to realize it.

It has become totally absurd to carry on talking about a peace process while Israel continues, with total comfort and complete disregard to the objections of the countries of the world, constructing settlements on the Palestinian territories in the West Bank, its alteration of the features of the occupied East Jerusalem, its use of violence against civilians and its blockade of Gaza in violation of international legitimacy and the provisions of international law. Regrettably, anyone with a sense of fairness following the situation would see in Israel's action the embodiment of its continuing evasion from admitting that the only way to achieve its security is through reaching a just settlement with the Palestinians through serious negotiations based on clear parameters and a specific time frame. What is urgently required now is to intensify all our efforts in order to put an end to this conflict.

Egypt was, and will remain, committed to the goal of achieving just and comprehensive peace that it had initiated in the Middle East and will continue to actively support it. Egypt will carry on its efforts to end the Israeli occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to reach a solution to all the final status issues in a specific, agreed upon and internationally guaranteed time frame. Egypt will also sustain its efforts to capitalize on the successes realized in Cairo through the signing of the Palestinian reconciliation agreement thereby strengthening the unity of the Palestinians and consolidating efforts to achieve peace.

Mr. President,

Egypt welcomes the presence of the Republic of South Sudan among us here today, as a member state of the United Nations. We hope that this nascent state will play a tangible role in preserving regional stability and make steady progress on the road to development and institutions building. At the same time, we commend the Sudan for its commitment to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and respect the will of the people of the South to have an independent state. But even though last year witnessed significant cooperation between the two sides, outstanding issues remain unsettled. They should be resolved within a framework of cooperation and goodwill, which requires the formation of a genuine partnership to examine how to deal with these issues. It is no secret that the Sudan and South Sudan are still expecting the support of the international community to their development and reconstruction efforts, so that the Sudan can achieve stability and development throughout its territory and within the context of its unity and territorial integrity, and that South Sudan can build its state and institutions. It is on that basis that I reiterate Egypt's resolve to continue supporting both countries at all levels.

Mr. President,

I would like, on behalf of Egypt, to pay a deserved tribute to the revolution of the sisterly state of Tunisia which accelerated the arrival of the Arab Spring. I wish to express our solidarity with the brotherly people of Libya and to congratulate the Transitional National Council for occupying the seat of Libya at the United Nations and salute its efforts to restore stability and internal peace. I would also like to express Egypt's readiness to provide any support that may contribute to the reconstruction efforts of the country and to surpass this critical period.

As for the brotherly state of Yemen, Egypt supports all efforts currently exerted to achieve stability and meet the expectations of its people according to mechanisms to be agreed upon by the people of Yemen themselves. If the status quo remains unchanged, this will undoubtedly have grave implications on the security and stability of the region.

Many Egyptians follow apprehensively the serious developments taking place in the brotherly state of Syria and the ensuing loss of lives and sufferings endured by our brothers and sisters there. I would like to reiterate today the position previously expressed by Egypt that the only solution to the crisis in Syria lies in putting an end to the violence and engaging in a serious dialogue among all parties in a climate of political openness.

On the other hand, I cannot overlook today referring to the Arab Gulf region and must emphasize that the security and stability of the Arab brotherly states of the Gulf constitute a special strategic importance to Egypt, and are very highly placed on the priority echelon of Egypt's foreign policy on the basis of the deep historical, societal, cultural, political and security ties that bond us with our brothers and sisters in these countries. Egypt will always strive to achieve the stability of this vital region of the world.

Mr. President,

The issue of disarmament and non-proliferation remains of great importance to Egypt. We will continue, in cooperation with our international partners, to push for nuclear states to carry out their responsibilities as stipulated in the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, in order to safeguard the credibility of this legal instrument and its ensuing indivisible principles. Furthermore, Egypt will not spare any effort in pursuing the goal of realizing the universality of the Non Proliferation Treaty, especially in the Middle East region where all countries have acceded to the treaty, with the exception of Israel, thereby delaying the creation of a nuclear weapons free zone in the region.

That is why Egypt attaches great importance to the implementation of the four action plans adopted by the 2010 NPT Review Conference, especially the one relating to the Middle East which endorsed the holding of a conference on the Middle East next year. In reality, we are concerned by the fact that a facilitator has not yet been nominated and that a host country for the conference has not yet been selected even though more than sixteen months have elapsed since the Review Conference ended.

It's in that context that I reiterate Egypt's firm position that the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy must be linked to the full compliance with the international commitments under the treaty. This entails the full cooperation of all member states, including Iran, with the International Atomic Energy Agency and avoiding any escalation in order to promote non-proliferation efforts in the region.

Mr. President,

Africa has always held a privileged position and a unique status on the priority agenda of Egyptian foreign policy. Egypt was always an effective partner in the struggle of the peoples of this continent to gain their independence in the fifties and sixties of last century. This partnership also continued during the reconstruction period that followed independence. Egypt will increasingly work towards deepening and activating its various cooperation mechanisms with other African countries and strive to propel them towards a new dawn, thereby contributing to the realization of the hopes and aspirations of our peoples for more development and increased prosperity.

Egypt expects the United Nations to maintain its efforts in supporting the various components of the African peace and security structure and to build the institutional capacity of the continent in the areas of conflict resolution, peace keeping, peace building and reconstruction. That's in addition to supporting the developmental aspirations of the African countries and assisting their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, given the interlinkages between peace, security and development challenges in Africa.

Egypt follows with concern the ongoing deteriorating situation in Somalia, and calls for concerted efforts at the regional and international levels to put an end to the sufferings endured by the brotherly people of Somalia, and to enable it to achieve peace and ensure a successful capacity building process. Egypt once again invites external parties to refrain from negatively interfering in the internal affairs of Somalia and to contribute instead in the efforts undertaken to improve the humanitarian situation and achieve stability.

In this regard, Egypt has effectively contributed to the international efforts to tackle the problem of drought in the Horn of Africa, eradicate hunger and provide food to the affected populations. Egypt also contributes to the fight against piracy along the coast of Somalia to put an end to this phenomenon given the strategic importance of the region south of the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea, especially in relation to Egypt's national security and to the safety of navigation in the Suez Canal.

Mr. President,

The ability of the United Nations to undertake its responsibilities depends on our collective will. One that is based on a robust determination to strengthen our joint international efforts to enable the Organization to deal more effectively with the various international and regional issues and problems we face. This requires that we work together to reinforce the principles of democracy within multilateralism and to promote dialogue and understanding as the only means to achieve our goals, thereby advancing the ideals of humanity and achieving the ambitions of our peoples for freedom, justice, peace and security.

Thank you Mr. President

