

Address by
His Excellency Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadi-Nejad
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
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Madam President,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished Heads of Delegation,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

I praise the Merciful, All-Knowing and Almighty God for blessing me with another opportunity to address this Assembly on behalf of the great nation of Iran and to bring a number of issues to the attention of the international community.

I also praise the Almighty for the increasing vigilance of peoples across the globe, their courageous presence in different international settings, and the brave expression of their views and aspirations regarding global issues.

Today, humanity passionately craves commitment to the Truth, devotion to God, quest for Justice and respect for the dignity of human beings. Rejection of domination and aggression, defense of the oppressed, and longing for peace constitute the legitimate demand of the peoples of the world, particularly the new generations and the spirited youth, who aspire a world free from decadence, aggression and injustice, and replete with love and compassion. The youth have a right to seek justice and the Truth; and they have a right to build their own future on the foundations of love, compassion and tranquility. And, I praise the Almighty for this immense blessing.

Madame President,
Excellencies,

What afflicts humanity today is certainly not compatible with human dignity; the Almighty has not created human beings so that they could transgress against others and oppress them.

By causing war and conflict, some are fast expanding their domination, accumulating greater wealth and usurping all the resources, while others endure the resulting poverty, suffering and misery.

Some seek to rule the world relying on weapons and threats, while others live in perpetual insecurity and danger.

Some occupy the homeland of others, thousands of kilometers away from their borders, interfere in their affairs and control their oil and other resources and strategic routes, while others are bombarded daily in their own homes; their children murdered in the streets and alleys of their own country and their homes reduced to rubble.

Such behavior is not worthy of human beings and runs counter to the Truth, to justice and to human dignity. The fundamental question is that under such conditions, where should the oppressed seek justice? Who, or what organization defends the rights of the oppressed, and suppresses acts of aggression and oppression? Where is the seat of global justice?

A brief glance at a few examples of the most pressing global issues can further illustrate the problem.

A. The unbridled expansion of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons

Some powers proudly announce their production of second and third generations of nuclear weapons. What do they need these weapons for? Is the development and stockpiling of these deadly weapons designed to promote peace and democracy? Or, are these weapons, in fact, instruments of coercion and threat against other peoples and governments? How long should the people of the world live with the nightmare of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons? What bounds the powers producing and possessing these weapons? How can they be held accountable before the international community? And, are the inhabitants of these countries content with the waste of their wealth and resources for the production of such destructive arsenals? Is it not possible to rely on justice, ethics and wisdom instead of these instruments of death? Aren't wisdom and justice more compatible with peace and tranquility than nuclear, chemical and biological weapons? If wisdom, ethics and justice prevail, then oppression and aggression will be uprooted, threats will wither away and no reason will remain for conflict. This is a solid proposition because most global conflicts emanate from injustice, and from the powerful, not being contented with their own rights, striving to devour the rights of others.

People across the globe embrace justice and are willing to sacrifice for its sake.

Would it not be easier for global powers to ensure their longevity and win hearts and minds through the championing of real promotion of justice, compassion and peace, than through continuing the proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons and the threat of their use?

The experience of the threat and the use of nuclear weapons is before us. Has it achieved anything for the perpetrators other than exacerbation of tension, hatred and animosity among nations?

B. Occupation of countries and exacerbation of hostilities

Occupation of countries, including Iraq, has continued for the last three years. Not a day goes by without hundreds of people getting killed in cold blood. The occupiers are incapable of establishing security in Iraq. Despite the establishment of the lawful Government and National Assembly of Iraq, there are covert and overt efforts to heighten insecurity, magnify and aggravate differences within Iraqi society, and instigate civil strife.

There is no indication that the occupiers have the necessary political will to eliminate the sources of instability. Numerous terrorists were apprehended by the Government of Iraq, only to be let loose under various pretexts by the occupiers.

It seems that intensification of hostilities and terrorism serves as a pretext for the continued presence of foreign forces in Iraq.

Where can the people of Iraq seek refuge, and from whom should the Government of Iraq seek justice?

Who can ensure Iraq's security? Insecurity in Iraq affects the entire region. Can the Security Council play a role in restoring peace and security in Iraq, while the occupiers are themselves permanent members of the Council? Can the Security Council adopt a fair decision in this regard?

Consider the situation in Palestine:

The roots of the Palestinian problem go back to the Second World War. Under the pretext of protecting some of the survivors of that War, the land of Palestine was occupied through war, aggression and the displacement of millions of its inhabitants; it was placed under the control of some of the War survivors, bringing even larger population groups from elsewhere in the world, who had not been even affected by the Second World War; and a government was established in the territory of others with a population collected from across the world at the expense of driving millions of the rightful inhabitants of the land into a diaspora and homelessness. This is a great tragedy with hardly a precedent in history. Refugees continue to live in temporary refugee camps, and many have died still hoping to one day return to their land. Can any logic, law or legal reasoning justify this tragedy? Can any member of the United Nations accept such a tragedy occurring in their own homeland?

The pretexts for the creation of the regime occupying Al-Qods Al-Sharif are so weak that its proponents want to silence any voice trying to merely speak about

them, as they are concerned that shedding light on the facts would undermine the *raison d'être* of this regime, as it has. The tragedy does not end with the establishment of a regime in the territory of others. Regrettably, from its inception, that regime has been a constant source of threat and insecurity in the Middle East region, waging war and spilling blood and impeding the progress of regional countries, and has also been used by some powers as an instrument of division, coercion, and pressure on the people of the region. Reference to these historical realities may cause some disquiet among supporters of this regime. But these are sheer facts and not myth. History has unfolded before our eyes.

Worst yet, is the blanket and unwarranted support provided to this regime.

Just watch what is happening in the Palestinian land. People are being bombarded in their own homes and their children murdered in their own streets and alleys. But no authority, not even the Security Council, can afford them any support or protection. Why?

At the same time, a Government is formed democratically and through the free choice of the electorate in a part of the Palestinian territory. But instead of receiving the support of the so-called champions of democracy, its Ministers and Members of Parliament are illegally abducted and incarcerated in full view of the international community.

Which council or international organization stands up to protect this brutally besieged Government? And why can't the Security Council take any steps?

Let me here address Lebanon:

For thirty-three long days, the Lebanese lived under the barrage of fire and bombs and close to 1.5 million of them were displaced; meanwhile some members of the Security Council practically chose a path that provided ample opportunity for the aggressor to achieve its objectives militarily. We witnessed that the Security Council of the United Nations was practically incapacitated by certain powers to even call for a ceasefire. The Security Council sat idly by for so many days, witnessing the cruel scenes of atrocities against the Lebanese while tragedies such as Qana were persistently repeated. Why?

In all these cases, the answer is self-evident. When the power behind the hostilities is itself a permanent member of the Security Council, how then can this Council fulfill its responsibilities?

C. Lack of respect for the rights of members of the international community

Excellencies,

I now wish to refer to some of the grievances of the Iranian people and speak to the injustices against them.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is a member of the IAEA and is committed to the NPT. All our nuclear activities are transparent, peaceful and under the watchful eyes of IAEA inspectors. Why then are there objections to our legally recognized rights? Which governments object to these rights? Governments that themselves benefit from nuclear energy and the fuel cycle. Some of them have abused nuclear technology for non-peaceful ends including the production of nuclear bombs, and some even have a bleak record of using them against humanity.

Which organization or Council should address these injustices? Is the Security Council in a position to address them? Can it stop violations of the inalienable rights of countries? Can it prevent certain powers from impeding scientific progress of other countries?

The abuse of the Security Council, as an instrument of threat and coercion, is indeed a source of grave concern.

Some permanent members of the Security Council, even when they are themselves parties to international disputes, conveniently threaten others with the Security Council and declare, even before any decision by the Council, the condemnation of their opponents by the Council. The question is: what can justify such exploitation of the Security Council, and doesn't it erode the credibility and effectiveness of the Council? Can such behavior contribute to the ability of the Council to maintain security?

Excellencies,

A review of the preceding historical realities would lead to the conclusion that regrettably, justice has become a victim of force and aggression.

Many global arrangements have become unjust, discriminatory and irresponsible as a result of undue pressure from some of the powerful;

Threats with nuclear weapons and other instruments of war by some powers have taken the place of respect for the rights of nations and the maintenance and promotion of peace and tranquility;

For some powers, claims of promotion of human rights and democracy can only last as long as they can be used as instruments of pressure and intimidation against other nations. But when it comes to the interests of the claimants, concepts such as democracy, the right of self-determination of nations, respect for the rights and intelligence of peoples, international law and justice have no place or value. This is blatantly manifested in the way the elected Government of the Palestinian people is treated as well as in the support extended to the Zionist regime. It does not matter if people are murdered in Palestine, turned into refugees, captured, imprisoned or besieged; that must not violate human rights.

- Nations are not equal in exercising their rights recognized by international law. Enjoying these rights is dependent on the whim of certain major powers.

- Apparently the Security Council can only be used to ensure the security and the rights of some big powers. But when the oppressed are decimated under bombardment, the Security Council must remain aloof and not even call for a ceasefire. Is this not a tragedy of historic proportions for the Security Council, which is charged with maintaining the security of countries?
- The prevailing order of contemporary global interactions is such that certain powers equate themselves with the international community, and consider their decisions superseding that of over 180 countries. They consider themselves the masters and rulers of the entire world and other nations as only second class in the world order.

Excellencies,

The question needs to be asked: if the Governments of the United States or the United Kingdom who are permanent members of the Security Council, commit aggression, occupation and violation of international law, which of the organs of the UN can take them to account? Can a Council in which they are privileged members address their violations? Has this ever happened? In fact, we have repeatedly seen the reverse. If they have differences with a nation or state, they drag it to the Security Council and as claimants, arrogate to themselves simultaneously the roles of prosecutor, judge and executioner. Is this a just order? Can there be a more vivid case of discrimination and more clear evidence of injustice?

Regrettably, the persistence of some hegemonic powers in imposing their exclusionist policies on international decision making mechanisms, including the Security Council, has resulted in a growing mistrust in global public opinion, undermining the credibility and effectiveness of this most universal system of collective security.

Excellencies,

How long can such a situation last in the world? It is evident that the behavior of some powers constitutes the greatest challenge before the Security Council, the entire organization and its affiliated agencies.

The present structure and working methods of the Security Council, which are legacies of the Second World War, are not responsive to the expectations of the current generation and the contemporary needs of humanity.

Today, it is undeniable that the Security Council, most critically and urgently, needs legitimacy and effectiveness. It must be acknowledged that as long as the Council is unable to act on behalf of the entire international community in a transparent, just and democratic manner, it will neither be legitimate nor effective. Furthermore, the direct relation between the abuse of veto and the erosion of the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council has now been clearly and undeniably established. We cannot, and should not, expect the eradication, or even containment, of injustice, imposition and oppression without reforming the structure and working methods of the Council.

Is it appropriate to expect this generation to submit to the decisions and arrangements established over half a century ago? Doesn't this generation or future generations have the right to decide themselves about the world in which they want to live?

Today, serious reform in the structure and working methods of the Security Council is, more than ever before, necessary. Justice and democracy dictate that the role of the General Assembly, as the highest organ of the United Nations, must be respected. The General Assembly can then, through appropriate mechanisms, take on the task of reforming the Organization and particularly rescue the Security Council from its current state. In the interim, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the African continent should each have a representative as a permanent member of the Security Council, with veto privilege. The resulting balance would hopefully prevent further trampling of the rights of nations.

Madame President,
Excellencies,

It is essential that spirituality and ethics find their rightful place in international relations. Without ethics and spirituality, attained in light of the teachings of Divine prophets, justice, freedom and human rights cannot be guaranteed.

Resolution of contemporary human crises lies in observing ethics and spirituality and the governance of righteous people of high competence and piety.

Should respect for the rights of human beings become the predominant objective, then injustice, ill-temperament, aggression and war will fade away.

Human beings are all God's creatures and are all endowed with dignity and respect.

No one has superiority over others. No individual or states can arrogate to themselves special privileges, nor can they disregard the rights of others and, through influence and pressure, position themselves as the "international community".

Citizens of Asia, Africa, Europe and America are all equal. Over six billion inhabitants of the earth are all equal and worthy of respect.

Justice and protection of human dignity are the two pillars in maintaining sustainable peace, security and tranquility in the world.

It is for this reason that we state:

Sustainable peace and tranquility in the world can only be attained through justice, spirituality, ethics, compassion and respect for human dignity.

All nations and states are entitled to peace, progress and security.

We are all members of the international community and we are all entitled to insist on the creation of a climate of compassion, love and justice.

All members of the United Nations are affected by both the bitter and the sweet events and developments in today's world.

We can adopt firm and logical decisions, thereby improving the prospects of a better life for current and future generations.

Together, we can eradicate the roots of bitter maladies and afflictions, and instead, through the promotion of universal and lasting values such as ethics, spirituality and justice, allow our nations to taste the sweetness of a better future.

Peoples, driven by their divine nature, intrinsically seek Good, Virtue, Perfection and Beauty. Relying on our peoples, we can take giant steps towards reform and pave the road for human perfection. Whether we like it or not, justice, peace and virtue will sooner or later prevail in the world with the will of Almighty God. It is imperative, and also desirable, that we too contribute to the promotion of justice and virtue.

The Almighty and Merciful God, who is the Creator of the Universe, is also its Lord and Ruler. Justice is His command. He commands His creatures to support one another in Good, virtue and piety, and not in decadence and corruption.

He commands His creatures to enjoin one another to righteousness and virtue and not to sin and transgression. All Divine prophets from the Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) to the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), to the Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), to the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), have all called humanity to monotheism, justice, brotherhood, love and compassion. Is it not possible to build a better world based on monotheism, justice, love and respect for the rights of human beings, and thereby transform animosities into friendship?

I emphatically declare that today's world, more than ever before, longs for just and righteous people with love for all humanity; and above all longs for the perfect righteous human being and the real savior who has been promised to all peoples and who will establish justice, peace and brotherhood on the planet.

O, Almighty God, all men and women are Your creatures and You have ordained their guidance and salvation. Bestow upon humanity that thirsts for justice, the perfect human being promised to all by You, and make us among his followers and among those who strive for his return and his cause.