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SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS
OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

H.E. Mr. KAREL DE GUCHT

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Mister President,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Belgium's international commitment is rooted in the conviction that only **dialogue** and **cooperation** can push the initiatives taken at the international level forward. The careful building process of the European Union taught us that.

That is why Belgium firmly believes in the virtues of multilateralism.

By standing together, we are stronger.

By standing together, we benefit from more legitimacy, and thus from more opportunities of making our voices heard.

Mister President,

The challenges facing the United Nations have the merit of being clear.

As the Secretary General mentioned, the options that become available to the world will depend on the answers that we provide.

The credibility of the United Nations will continue to be judged by the organization's efficiency and by its results on the ground. We must therefore seek to reinforce the United Nations system.

We fully support the Secretary General's efforts in this difficult task. At the same time, we believe that the United Nations should better reflect today's new international realities.

Mister President,

In order to find a final solution to the crisis in the **Great Lakes Region**, we need the United Nations' sustained commitment.

The conflict has already cost millions of lives. We must react. Inaction would mean being guilty of neglect.

While I am not underestimating the difficulties encountered on the ground, I am convinced that a solution can be found. I thus refuse to believe that the stabilization process is doomed to deadlock or failure.

Mister President,

In view of the situation in **Rwanda**, we offer our full support to the laudable efforts made towards reconciliation.

Normalized relations between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are absolutely indispensable and must be based on collaboration and good neighborly relations. This implies the mutual respect of the borders.

In many regards, the latest developments in **Burundi** are encouraging.

A constitution has been adopted, a referendum has been announced and the Commission in charge of supervising the elections is already in place.

Naturally, these elections are essential, which is why Belgium has provided significant financial backing to their organization.

I also urge the International Community to specify without delay what means it is ready to mobilize to this effect.

Mister President,

Belgium shares the concerns about the humanitarian crisis in **Darfur**.

There is no excuse for the persecution and the systematic massacre of thousands of human beings.

In light of such suffering, the efforts and the progress made thus far remain insufficient. Belgium thus insists on the swift establishment of an international investigations commission.

Mister President,

The situation in **Iraq** will continue to present a considerable challenge over the coming months and even years.

I congratulate the United Nations for its continued support to the Iraqi transition process, especially given the country's climate of insecurity.

The population of Iraq, which has already faced so many ordeals, must finally be able to live in peace.

It is of course the Iraqi people who must shoulder the responsibility of guiding the political process. A process that must lead to the creation of a new parliament, a new

constitution and a sovereign government. A government that must be capable of ensuring

In order to finally put an end to this horrifying chain reaction of destruction and death.

Thank you, Mister President.