

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Secretary General,
Distinguished Presidents, Prime Ministers and Ministers,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Today, sixty years after our predecessors established this unique organization, whose programme is already suggested by its very name, United Nations, we can face one another as their successors and say contentedly: we have succeeded.

At the same time, however, sixty decades after the establishment of the United Nations, we must face one another with a sense of bitter reality and say: we have failed.

Both are true.

Both statements speak about the world over the past period, but most of all about ourselves - because it has often been said, with good reason, that the United Nations are as good as their member states. Of course, these states determine by their behaviour the world in which we live. It is an indisputable fact that the world which founded the United Nations was united much more than the present world.

That was a world united by a common goal, the opposition to the ideology and practice of fascism and Nazism, a world determined to prevent any repetition of the horrors of aggressive wars and of the Holocaust, the full truth of which had just begun to reach the public.

Our organization was founded at the end of the so far largest conflict in the history of humankind. It was founded with the noble intention, as stated in its Charter, to save future generations from the atrocities of war. This is precisely the first element which provides the grounds for my initial statements. Yes, we have preserved peace on the global scale, there has been no new world war, and to that extent we have been successful. But we have not been able to save the world and humankind from a long string of cruel and bloody wars, and in that context we have undeniably failed.

The principles of freedom, national and individual freedom, and of equality in international relations were some of the priorities of the new world which was being built. The development issue and the overcoming of the ever larger gap between the developed and the underdeveloped have been on the agenda of the General Assembly on a number of occasions. We have also discussed terrorism - to be true, mainly with the kind subsumed under state terrorism. Lacking the strength to prevent them, we have endeavoured to heal the consequences of wars and armed conflicts. The results in all these efforts have been incomplete, partial; we have achieved progress, but no issue has been dealt with conclusively.

Our current tasks were formulated very well at the millennial meeting five years ago. On behalf of the Republic of Croatia I welcome the Declaration on the

The United Nations must become qualified to achieve these goals. The organization must draw its strength from our firm commitment to building a world which will not only be better than the world of sixty years ago, but even better than our current world. It must never become a mere trimming on the international scene. Even more importantly, it must never become a screen providing legitimacy to any policy clearly opposed to the mood of the majority, our mood, the mood of the nations and states united in the effort to build a better future world.

Nevertheless, in spite of this only partial success, we have achieved a lot. We are now faced with a question which calls for an answer by deeds rather than words: can we be united in order to survive, in order to literally save our world for future generations?

I hope and believe that we shall have the strength and the wisdom for an affirmative answer to this question.

We owe it to the founders of the United Nations but also to our children and to the children of our children.

We must not betray either.

Thank you!