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**STATEMENT
BY**

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**at the
Thematic Debate of the General Assembly
on “The United Nations in Global Governance”**

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Mr. President,

It is a great pleasure and privilege to address the participants at the current thematic Debate on the United Nations and Global Governance. The debate is both legitimate and necessary. The UN has been an indispensable forum of global governance since its inception in 1945 and remains, more than ever, a major forum for collective political discussion and policy making.

The UN General Assembly recently appointed our Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon for his second term. I wish to express a deep and widely shared appreciation for his work in the critically important areas of global governance such as conflict resolution and conflict prevention, disaster relief, global warming and many others. I wish the Secretary-General every success at the helm of the United Nations. There is no doubt that the current debate represents an opportunity for all of us, the participants in the debate, to help the Secretary-General in developing useful ideas and effective measures which will improve the multilateral system.

Improvement of the international system is clearly necessary in a world where challenges are growing increasingly complex and interrelated.

Let me take just a few examples: the non-traditional threats to international peace and security are becoming more and more central in the international security landscape and they relate to the increasing social disintegration which characterizes many societies today.

In the economic field the world has pulled back from the abyss of the global meltdown in 2008 only to move into a period of great uncertainty and uneven development. The prospect of a potential food crisis and the rise of energy and commodity prices add to the problems of persistent poverty in many developing countries, the persistent high unemployment in much of the industrialized countries and the growing concerns about social stability and social progress in the larger part of the World.

While there has been some progress in the field of care for the natural environment, the major challenge of global warming hasn't been addressed effectively as yet.

In the field of human rights there has been improvement since the ending of the Cold War, but massive violations of human rights resulting from armed conflicts, oppression and lack of economic and social development remain the basic determinants of the unsatisfactory global state of human rights.

There is little if any doubt that this state of affairs is unsatisfactory. Some among the serious analysts describe the situation in increasingly harsh terms. Thus, the Global Risks Report from the year 2011, produced earlier this year by the World Economic Forum, identified two major risks that, according to the authors of the report, carry special significance, given their high degrees of impact and interconnectedness. These two risks are: the economic disparity and the global governance failure. They appear to be particularly significant because both of them influence the evolution of many other global risks, and at the same time, inhibit the capacity to respond effectively to them.

It is disturbing that the difficulties in global governance are described, in a document of a prestigious and competent organization such as the World Economic Forum, as "failure". The perception of failure created by the Doha Round trade negotiations and Copenhagen

negotiations on climate change might be unfair and unjustified, but it is real, it creates a real and corrosive effect on the entire understanding of what global governance is and what it can achieve.

It is interesting that the authors of the mentioned WEF report described the reasons for the alleged failure of global governance as a paradox with which the UN is very familiar: The same conditions which make global governance crucial are making it also exceedingly difficult: divergent interests, conflicting incentives, differing values and norms.

This is precisely the reality in which the UN has been operating since its inception. Global governance is something expected to work without the existence of global government. This is a reality which makes the concept of global governance fundamentally different from the governance exercised at the national level. This creates two important parameters for any discussion on global governance.

First, it is absolutely necessary to avoid the illusion that global governance can be divorced from the reality of nation states, their policies and their needs. Global governance, to the extent that it exists, needs to fully incorporate the reality of nation states. The recent experience of the Doha Round and Copenhagen negotiations on global warming have only reaffirmed this.

Second, it is incumbent on nation states or, in the UN context, on the UN member states, to consider both, their governance tasks at the national level as well as their international responsibilities. In a much quoted report titled "We, the Peoples", the then Secretary-General Kofi Annan, insisted that States need to develop a deeper awareness of their dual role in the global World. In addition to the responsibility to their own society, states are, collectively, the custodians of our common life on this planet, which the citizens of all countries share. This basic thought needs to be repeated again and again because there is no alternative to collective action of states as the only path to better global governance.

Obviously, collective action of states can produce results only when the appropriate political will and a sense of common purpose exist. Both are needed and each of them is difficult to generate. Sometimes the fear of common threat will suffice. But this is usually not sufficient as the outcome of the Copenhagen Conference on global warming demonstrated. Sometimes fear of a distant danger can be combined with a "creative utopia" which yields a real breakthrough as seen at the time of creation of the UN and again not long ago, in early 1990s, when the World Trade Organization took the current shape. But that example also shows that institutional progress and real achievement in some of the areas of the international trading system do not yet guarantee the success of a larger project - such as the development round of the global trade negotiations.

These are important lessons for the United Nations and its own role in the context of global governance. For the UN, being global both in its membership and the scope of its agenda and, at the same time, a unique repository of experience, it is only logical to claim a central role in addressing global challenges and global governance. In addition to the much needed responsible behavior of member states, the UN System has to look into its own structure, policies and practices. The UN System as a whole has to adjust and reform internally. It has to develop effective partnerships with other international mechanisms, regional organizations, business communities and civil society groups.

The UN should also be in the lead in conceptualizing the global vision on how the different actors in this picture should cooperate with a view to achieving optimal results.

These tasks have been on the agenda for a long time now. A variety of proposals ensued and there have been some improvements. And, it has also become clear that the UN is nowhere near a new San Francisco moment and that it will gradually have to change.

Changing gradually does not necessarily mean minimally or timidly. Perhaps, the time for a high ambition level is approaching. The debates on Security Council reform have been going on for two decades in an uninterrupted process. Let us not accept that this becomes a never ending process. The emergence of the group of G 20 has created new hopes for effective leadership in the global economy. But it has also opened new questions of legitimacy in the international economic decision making. In addition, it seems that the initial energy demonstrated by the G 20 has gradually started to decline. The problem of stagnation and decline of a recently established international mechanism is by no means unknown to the United Nations. In the field of human rights the recently established Human Rights Council, which has successfully established its basic procedures must be strengthened so as to bring the UN action in the field of human rights to the needed higher level.

So what should be on the agenda for today? In my opinion, offered today by way of a hypothesis, intended to start off our thematic debate, the agenda of the UN reform it could be summarized in four "R's".

Rebalance the Security Council;
Refocus the General Assembly;
Recalibrate the Economic and Social Council and
Reinforce the Human Rights Council.

Let me explain.

The debate on the Security Council reform has produced a sufficient number of ideas and proposals. The time has come to move towards decisions. Ideally, these decisions should be adopted by consensus. However let us keep in mind the provisions of the Charter relating to the methods of decision making. Consensus should not be a path to inaction. A strong majority is adequate as a guarantee of legitimate decisions.

On an earlier occasion I have proposed a few ideas relating to the future composition of the Security Council. They suggest changes in both categories of members of the Security Council and thus include additional permanent members and a category of non permanent members with a more frequent rotation. Together, they would produce a Security Council of 25 members, a number which would improve the Council's representative character while retaining and possibly strengthening its effectiveness.

The General Assembly should be more and better focused in its deliberations. It needs bold measures to streamline its agenda, its committee structure and its procedures. It should make better use of plenary debates focused on specific priorities, for example those derived from the analysis of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and from post Copenhagen negotiations on climate change. It should also reduce the burden of committee work, rationalize the number of requests for Secretary General's reports and strengthen the authority of the President of the General Assembly. And, most important, it should develop a

more creative cooperation with the other principal organs, in particular the three councils - Security Council, ECOSOC and Human Rights Council. As the principal, the most inclusive and transparent deliberative body of the United Nations, the General Assembly should be in a position to guide the three councils and provide the general direction of their work.

The Economic and Social Council has been a subject of discussion and experiment for decades. It is not difficult to understand the reasons why it cannot fulfill all the expectations vested in it by the UN Charter. It is also understandable why the idea of periodic ministerial meetings cannot produce the desired results. However, the changing global development landscape calls for additional attempts. There is a need for an organized and systematic interaction between the G 20, the repository of the global economic power, and the UN as the source of global legitimacy. Why should ECOSOC not serve as the interface between the two? And, on a separate though related note, why should ECOSOC not become the single governing body of the UN funds and programs in the field of economic and social development? In a single phrase - the Economic and Social Council could and should be recalibrated. How much and how far remains a matter for debate.

And finally, the Human Rights Council needs to be reinforced. Since its relatively recent inception the Human Rights Council has made significant efforts and produced an ambitious agenda. It has developed much needed and promising instruments such as the Universal Periodic Reviews. However, further investment in the Council is needed, in particular in its dealings with those challenges to human rights resulting directly from the lack of economic and social development. The right to development should be used as the conceptual framework for the analysis of these challenges and for the formulation of specific policy recommendations. The analytical capacity of the entire UN system should be put to the full use of the Human Rights Council. There is room for improvement in its ability to have a stronger impact on the ground and to respond to situations of concern and emergency situations more efficiently.

Mr. President,

I have outlined a few ideas which might help starting this thematic debate on the role of the UN in global governance. It is obvious that the UN must improve in order to play its legitimate central role worldwide. Let me conclude by expressing hope and, indeed, my profound belief that the UN is capable of both, improving itself and improving the general quality of global governance.

Thank you, Mr. President.