

Speech by
H.E. Anders Fogh Rasmussen,
Prime Minister of Denmark,
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”Mexico, EU and UN”

“President of ITAM (Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México),
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting me to speak here today. Having the opportunity to share my views with you on the situation in the European Union and the UN today is a privilege. In particular, at a university like this - renowned for its high standards - not least in the field of international relations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The need for international co-operation is greater than ever. In an ever more globalised world, where challenges, opportunities and risks transcend borders ever more easily, the need for international co-operation is increasing. Both Mexico and Denmark have understood this. And both countries actively take part in the great international institutions like the United Nations.

Faced with the new challenges, opportunities and risks, institutions with an international agenda like the United Nations and the European Union have to adapt and change to the new world. We, the Member States of these institutions, must take the lead and make sure that these changes are carried out to the benefit of all.

[United Nations]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations is a key international player. The United Nations is assigned the noble and giant task of improving the world for all the people of the world. Denmark is a founding member of the United Nations. We truly believe in the unique value of the United Nations in managing world affairs. Over the course of the past six decades the UN has served as an invaluable forum for discussions with global impact.

Today we need the UN more than ever. We need the UN to provide a more secure world, to fight international terrorism, to resolve conflicts and to halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We need the UN to ensure that fundamental human rights for all people are respected. We need the UN to establish, implement and develop an international legal order based on the rule of law. And we need the UN in our combat against poverty and in securing sustainable economic growth.

Only three years ago, world leaders agreed on the Millennium Declaration. This declaration represents the shared vision of Member States of the United

Nations, for global solidarity and security and the fight against poverty. The Monterrey-consensus represents an important contribution to this endeavor. In my view much will be achieved if we maintain our focus on implementing our joint vision anchored in the Millennium Declaration and especially the Millennium Development Goals. We still have an immense amount of work ahead of us. But I am confident that we are on the right path. And I can assure you that Denmark will continue to be in the forefront of the work that lies ahead of us. We will continue to focus on areas where we can contribute to make the world a better place to live. Denmark is therefore seeking to become a member of the Security Council 2005-2006. Just like Mexico is a member of the Security Council right now.

In order to strengthen its leadership, the UN must continue to reform and adapt to an ever-changing world. Just like the EU has to adapt to an increased Europe.

In his address to the General Assembly two months ago the Secretary General announced that the United Nations had come to a juncture – perhaps the most important one since the organisation was created in 1945. He asked that we now decide whether it is possible to continue on the existing basis or whether there is need for radical changes. His opinion is clear, and he raised a valid point. But it is we - the Member States - that must take decisions on how to move forward from this point. After all, without the contribution and active engagement of Member States, the UN is but an empty shell, a mirror image of the state of world affairs.

Certainly, now is the time for reflection. Let me briefly highlight three areas, where the UN could be even stronger:

- 1) Challenges against our security
- 2) International order based on the rule of law
- 3) Fight against poverty

First, the UN is at the core of efforts to tackle old and new security challenges. The Security Council is the single most important institution to world peace. In recent times, it has successfully taken on international terrorism and should continue to focus on how to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Still, the Security Council reflects the power structures that existed at the end of the Second World War. Consequently, a comprehensive reform is needed to improve the legitimacy of the Council – for instance by expanding the number of member seats – and at the same time safeguarding the efficiency of the decision-making process.

Second, the UN is essential for the establishment, implementation and development of an international legal order based on the rule of law. It is imperative that all states are committed to co-operate constructively with the UN human rights mechanisms and overcome traditional attitudes of State sovereignty.

Third, the UN is at the forefront in the fight against poverty. By agreeing to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, we have set ourselves

measurable targets, by which we must all stand and be counted. If we fail to reach the goals, we, the Member States, will bear the consequences.

[WTO]

Another organisation that has taken upon itself to combat poverty and to create a stronger global economy is the World Trade Organisation.

Mexico's efforts to organize the WTO Ministerial in Cancun were impressive. By hosting it, Mexico showed the way for all with respect to our international obligations. Unfortunately, the results did not reflect the organisational skills.

The WTO negotiations in the so-called Doha-Round are very important, for rich as well as for poor. They are not about a bigger piece of the cake for someone. They are about making the cake bigger for everyone. About better market access for Mexican agricultural products or textiles. Or for Danish maritime transport. The World Bank has calculated that more free trade can lead to global benefits up to 520 billion USD. More than half will go to the developing world.

In Cancun the EU tried to pave the way with an offer on agriculture. We were ready to stop all EU export subsidies on products of particular importance to the developing world. Later in the conference, the EU gave in on other issues concerning investment and competition. Unfortunately we were quite alone, and our efforts did not lead to similar reactions from other WTO-members.

Denmark and the EU feel a strong commitment to WTO and the Doha-Round. Cancun was a serious bump on the road. But it must not be the end of the road. In my opinion the break down does not question the multilateral track. WTO has global legitimacy and it delivers. Therefore we cannot sit back, but must continue to strive forward.

The difficult situation after Cancun puts pressure on all WTO members. On our side we'll continue to look for flexibility. But negotiation is a two way street. Everyone must contribute to the package. That goes for Denmark and the EU, as well as for Mexico and the countries in the so-called G21-group. One of the ideas that the EU finds it relevant to look into, is whether we can give more to the world's poorest by distinguishing between developing countries according to income. This implies offers by richer developing countries to the benefit of poorer developing countries. This may be a tough concession for the G21-countries. But we can leave no stone unturned to get the process back on track.

[European Union]

The European Union is another player deeply involved, concerned and active in international affairs. The European Union is continuously becoming a more important actor on the international stage. But also the EU needs to be reformed in order to adapt to the new world – and not least the enlarged Europe.

In 2003, Denmark celebrates 30 years of membership of the EU - 30 years of remarkable economic development. Of course, this has not been achieved solely because of our membership of the EU. But I am convinced that our membership has contributed substantially to the growth and development of our nation.

And Denmark is not the only Member State with this experience. I am sure that the current generations of Spaniards, Portuguese and Irish are able to confirm that regional free trade and economic cooperation has boosted their economies to an even greater extent.

Today, the EU is about far more than just economic cooperation. In the EU we have found ways of tackling a great variety of common challenges. We have developed common institutions and policies. And we have found ways to overcome differences and find common solutions. We have experienced two generations without war, on a continent that saw more bloodshed in the 20th century than any other part of the world.

During last year's Danish presidency of the EU, negotiations with ten new member states were successfully concluded. Enlarging the EU with new member states is our best guarantee for a Europe with political strength, with economic strength and with the power to make a difference in a troublesome world.

After the enlargement of the EU to 25 Member States, it is necessary to implement reforms in order to ensure the Union's ability to make decisions, take action and secure efficiency. This is why the Member States of the EU has set out to write a constitutional treaty for the European Union.

Last year a convention of national and European parliamentarians and government representatives was convened to develop a draft constitutional treaty for the EU. They presented a draft treaty in June this year. On this basis

the Governments of the EU are presently negotiating a number of outstanding issues. Mostly regarding institutional matters. We hope to reach agreement on the treaty by the end of the year.

One of the core issues in the negotiations is the future decision-making procedures in a Union of 25 member states. The EU should, in general, take more decisions on the basis of qualified majority. With 25 or more Member States in the Union, everything will be paralysed if individual countries are able to block decisions. Of course, there are vital areas in which unanimity must still be required. However, the tendency must be for us to make more majority decisions.

In addition, the new Constitutional Treaty will offer a clearer specification of the distribution of tasks between the EU and the Member States.

Just as the EU offers us an opportunity to deal with common challenges within Europe, it also provides us with tools to deal with challenges in the wider world. The world around us is changing. Through co-operation, the members of the EU can adapt to these changes and face the challenges of the new world order. Ideally, the EU should speak with one voice. One voice speaks louder on the international scene. However, it is hardly realistic to expect the Member States to surrender their national sovereignty in the areas of foreign, security and defence policy.

Seen from the perspective of a small country, it would in fact be an advantage if decisions on foreign and security policy were made in the Council of the EU.

That would give us influence on areas, which are today dominated, to a great extent, by the large countries. However, it is hardly realistic.

This does not mean that we should give up the goal of a common foreign, security and defence policy. On the contrary: we must endeavour to make it as common as possible. One practical solution could be the creation of a strong office of a Foreign Policy Representative of the EU - an EU Foreign Minister if you will. He – or she - would be able to speak with great weight on behalf of the EU when the EU Member States agree.

The further development of the EU's Common Foreign and Security policy does not aim to strengthen the EU at the expense of transatlantic co-operation. On the contrary. We have a vital and obvious interest in close and strong co-operation between Europe and our partners across the Atlantic. The Western World is facing challenges these days that make it necessary for Europe to be able to stand on its own feet to a much higher degree than before and make its own contribution on the world stage. This is not only in our interest; it is also in the interest of the rest of the world.

[Mexico]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mexico is by its sheer size, population, economy and location an important international player. Particularly in the last few years, Mexico has taken steps to be more actively involved on the international arena. Notably, Mexico is now a member of the UN Security Council and participating actively in other

international fora as well. Not least on the important issues of democracy and human rights.

The Global Agreement between the EU and Mexico is another proof of Mexico's integration into the global society. The agreement entered into force in 2000 and is an excellent example of a close partnership based on economic and political co-operation. The Global Agreement includes agreements on free trade that will benefit both parties. The EU will gain access – free of tariffs – to the largest Latin American market. And it will place Mexico in a very privileged position as a point of entry to the world's two main trading blocs – NAFTA and the EU. On top of free trade, is the regular political dialogue between the EU and Mexico. A dialogue that enables the parties to exchange views and positions on important issues - including democracy and human rights.

It is my sincere hope and firm belief that Mexico and Denmark will keep operating – and co-operating - actively within the framework of international institutions like the United Nations. Equally, it is my hope and belief that the strong ties between Mexico and the European Union will be strengthened even further.

The need for international co-operation is greater than ever. We, the Member States of these institutions, must take the lead and make sure that these changes are carried out to the benefit of all.

I have tried to present some of the Danish thoughts on challenges facing both your country and my contry. Now I look forward to hearing your comments and thoughts.

Thank you.”