In his address to the General Assembly yesterday, the President of Pakistan offered an action plan for peace between Pakistan and India. He invited India to open a dialogue with Pakistan. He offered a reciprocal ceasefire along the Line of Control in Kashmir. He offered to encourage a ceasefire within Indian occupied Kashmir. He offered enhanced monitoring of the Line of Control on both sides in Kashmir and he proposed the maintenance of arms balance both in conventional and non-conventional sectors between India and Pakistan.

The response which we had today from the distinguished Prime Minister of India was sadly disappointing. Disappointing for Pakistan and, I am sure, disappointing for the international community. By this negative response, we have lost another opportunity to build peace in South Asia. Pakistan’s offer of help to promote a cessation of hostilities within Indian occupied Kashmir was sadly misconstrued and misinterpreted by the distinguished Prime Minister of India as an admission of guilt. This is preposterous.

The Kashmiri struggle is between India and the Kashmiri people. 80,000 Kashmiris have been killed in Kashmir with impunity by 700,000 Indian occupation forces. These Kashmiris are buried in the graveyards of Kashmir not in Pakistan. India wants the killing to continue because it believes that even now after 12 years of failed suppression that it can cow down the Kashmiris to give up their struggle for liberty. India like all other colonial oppressors of the past is mistaken surely.

Kashmir will be free one day.

The dialogue which Pakistan has proposed to India is a dialogue for peace. It is not a favour to Pakistan. It is the only mechanism envisaged by our Charter to promote the easing of tension and the resolution of conflict. Sadly, the Indian Prime Minister rejected this reasonable offer for peace. This reflects the negative stance of the ruling party, the BJP, in India.

The purpose of the so-called hard-liners in New Delhi, Mr. President, is not cross-border terrorism. It is designed to utilize electoral gain for the Indian ruling party for the forthcoming state elections. The BJP’s political strategy is borne out of its victory in recent elections in Gujarat where it gained popularity after state managed massacre of 2000 innocent Muslims, thus, is the democracy being converted in the service of genocide. How great principles are perverted when fascists assume power.
The BJP’s fascist doctrine perpounded by the likes of Gowalkar is well known. This is a party, one of whose member assassinated Gandhi. It is the party which destroyed the Babri mosque, a great citadel of the Muslim culture of India. Five members were convicted the other day for this crime although the deputy leader of the party was let off. At recent electoral rallies, the BJP has threatened to destroy 3000 other mosques across India. A leader of the fascist Shiv Sena, Bal Thakeray recently called for the formation of groups to commit terrorist attacks against Pakistan and the Muslims of India. He is still running free.

Prime Minister Vajpayee has accused Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism in Kashmir. The Kashmiri struggle for self-determination, Mr. President, seeks to realize the implementation of the resolutions of the Security Council calling on India to hold a plebiscite to enable the Kashmiri people to determine their own destiny. The Security Council has said the elections held under Indian occupation, even if they were ever to be fair would not be a substitute for the plebiscite under UN auspices and no elections in Kashmir has ever been free or fair. In accordance with the UN decisions while India continues to brutally suppress the Kashmiri freedom struggles, the Kashmiris have a legitimate right to resist Indian occupation by all means at their disposal. This struggle cannot be denigrated or described as terrorism. As the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations has recently observed and I quote him “Internationally, we are seeing an increasing use of what I call the “T-word” – terrorism – to demonize political opponents, to throttle freedom of speech and the press, and to delegitimize legitimate political grievances. We are seeing too many cases where States living in tension with their neighbours make opportunistic use of the fight against terrorism to threaten or justify new military action on long-running disputes. Similarly, States fighting various forms of unrest or insurgency are finding it tempting to abandon the slow, difficult, but sometimes necessary processes of political negotiation for the deceptively easy option of military action.”

Mr. President,

One can concede that India knows a lot about terrorism. It is, to use a popular saying, the mother of terrorism. It has sponsored terrorism against each one of its neighbours. Read the book entitled “Indian intervention in Sri Lanka: the role of India’s intelligence agencies” by Rohan Gunaratna, “More than 20,000 Tamil militants were based in India. The first and second batch of training was provided by the Indian Foreign Intelligence Agency, the Research and Analysis Wing, in Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh at two Indian military facilities. After that they set up their own training camps in South India.”

Mr. President,
Let us remember that the first suicide bomber came from this batch trained by India. In the Chittagong Hills of Bangladesh in the late 1980s, the author continues "I met rebels who told me they had been instructed in both weaponry and "psy ops" the term they used in India, at a camp near Dehra Dun, in the Himalayan foothills. A decade and a half earlier India had trained other rebels." In Kashmir India has trained renegade Kashmiris and sent them across the border into Pakistan for terrorist acts."

Mr. President,

There are well documented reports also that Indian agencies have sponsored and directed renegade groups of Kashmiris to perpetrate terrorist actions within Indian occupied Kashmir as a means of intimidating the Kashmiris and defaming the Kashmiri freedom struggle. This is recorded by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and other Reports.

Mr. President,

The Indian Prime Minister spoke of Pakistan’s seeking military parity. We do not. We seek military balance. We are entitled to equal security and we urge India’s military suppliers not to spark another arms race in the sub-continent.

Mr. President,

It is our hope that despite Prime Minister Vajpayee’s statement today, cooler heads, if there are any in New Delhi, will reflect and will come to the conclusion that dialogue is the only answer to the problems that are between India and Pakistan and that they will respond positively to the offer made by the President of Pakistan yesterday.