
Mr. President,

War has come again to the Gulf. War is not only the last option; it is an ugly option.

2. Pakistan deplores the resort to the use of force. This was a war which Pakistan tried strenuously and sincerely to prevent. This is a war that was twelve years in the making. It could have been prevented if the increasingly robust UN inspection regime, installed after the adoption of resolution 1441, had been allowed more time to secure the effective and verified elimination of Iraq’s Weapons of Mass Destruction.

3. A large segment of the UN membership has participated in this debate conducted at the request of the Arab League and the Non-Aligned Movement. We hope the concerns voiced and the positions articulated here would help the Council find a united way forward in dealing with the challenges we confront.

4. We thank the distinguished Secretary-General for his very thoughtful statement yesterday. His eloquent call for urgent humanitarian relief for the Iraqi people and for unity within the Council deserves our utmost attention.

Mr. President,

5. The outbreak of this war was not due to the failure of the Security Council. The Council did not endorse the war. The Security Council remains relevant to restoring the peace, containing the conflict, providing relief and restoring stability and the rule of law.

Mr. President,

6. As Pakistan has said: The time and space for diplomacy never ends. The mandate of this Council is not only to maintain but also to “restore international peace and security.” In this situation, the Security Council cannot give up efforts for the cessation of hostilities.

7. In the midst of conflict, we must continue our collective efforts to search for ways in which peace can be restored. Obviously, we will not be able to achieve this by condemnation or recrimination, however deplorable the use of force. We could do so through exploration of the possibilities for peace between the warring parties. Surely, no one wishes to witness the needless loss of the lives of their sons and daughters and specially of innocent civilians. The search for the "magic ring" must not be given up.

Mr. President,

8. People must come first. To contain the human consequences of the conflict is our most urgent task. It is a task which we can fulfill. Pakistan was the first to call on the Council to address the welfare of the Iraqi people. We join in mourning for those – specially innocent men, women and children – who have lost their lives in these early days of the war.

9. The Council must ask for strict respect for international humanitarian law by the parties to the conflict. The ICRC has warned that humanitarian law prohibits “direct attacks against civilians” and requires that “belligerents must take every precaution in military operations to spare the civilian population.” Humanitarian law also states that “the right to choose methods of warfare is
not unlimited. Weapons having indiscriminate effect and/or causing unnecessary suffering are forbidden." Besides protecting civilians, sparing infrastructure, and preserving the sanctity of the holy places, the parties to the conflict must treat detainees humanely and provide maximum protection and assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons.

Mr. President,

10. As stipulated by the Fourth Geneva Convention, those in effective control or occupation of any territory are responsible for meeting the humanitarian needs of its population, and are required to maintain dialogue and cooperation with international organizations engaged in humanitarian relief.

11. Due to the application of sanctions for a dozen years, the Iraqi people are unfortunately dependent to meet their essential needs on the UN operated Oil-for-Food Programme. This relationship has been disrupted. Warned of the impending war, the Secretary-General had no choice but to withdraw UN personnel. Now, once the parameters of the conflict have become clearer, the UN can begin to resume its role and responsibilities for humanitarian and food assistance to the Iraqi people. Fortunately, the UN has the machinery to discharge these responsibilities.

12. Pakistan agrees that appropriate adjustments need to be made to the Oil-for-Food Programme to enable the Secretary-General to ensure that shipments of the most urgently required items that have already been contracted for are the first to be delivered at places where they can be received and distributed. We believe that for the provision of emergency relief the first consideration should be humanity rather than legality. The UN must deal with whoever is in effective control in the areas where aid is to be distributed. It must use all the existing Iraqi distribution networks for this purpose.

13. In this context, arrangements should be put in place to enable all humanitarian agencies and organizations which are prepared to assist, including humanitarian organizations in several Islamic countries, to be enabled to provide relief assistance to the Iraqi people. In Pakistan, official and non-governmental organizations are on stand-by for such arrangements to bring help to their Iraqi brothers and sisters.

14. While the existence of the Oil-for-Food Programme and the contracted shipments of 2.5 billion dollars underway may be the best option to urgently meet the essential needs of the Iraqi people, it is vital to underline certain principles in this context:

   One, the Security Council must re-affirm the permanent sovereignty of the Iraqi people over their natural resources. Control over these resources must revert to them as soon as possible. To this end, the sanctions imposed in the past must end quickly after the conflict.

   Two, the Iraqi people should not be asked to bear the burden of the extra costs that will be incurred in making the adjustments in the existing Oil-for-Food Programmes – by way of accelerating, delaying or diverting shipments. These extra costs should be met through the normal insurance coverage. If paid by the Oil-for-Food programme, they should be reimbursed by the contributions from the international community as soon as possible.

   Three, apart from the humanitarian responsibilities of the parties to the conflict, the international community must also contribute to meeting the essential needs of the Iraqi people. The existence of the Oil-for-Food Programme should not
imply that the Iraqi people must pay for the emergency needs created by a conflict which is not of their making.

15. The international humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people will need to be coherently planned and effectively coordinated. This can be best done by the United Nations. The Secretary-General may wish to consider the appointment of an appropriate high official who can serve as the focal point and coordinator of international relief assistance to Iraq.

Mr. President,

16. The third objective for the Security Council, the United Nations and the international community is to contain the conflict, to arrest the spread of instability in the region, and to restore the rule of law in Iraq and in international relations. The principles involved are clearly prescribed in our Charter:

- respect for the political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq and its neighbouring states;
- the right of the Iraqi people to choose their own political destiny and form of governance in exercise of their right to self-determination;
- non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs;
- permanent sovereignty and control over their natural resources;
- respect for the religious and cultural traditions of the people of Iraq and sanctity of the Holy places, which are among the most venerated in the Islamic world;
- the right of the Iraqi nation to economic and social reconstruction.

17. Discussion must commence within the Council and with others concerned – within and outside the UN – to realize these principles and objectives.

Mr. President,

18. Finally, to contain the Iraqi conflict, end hostilities, stabilize the region, and restore the rule of law, it will be essential to adopt a comprehensive and equitable approach to peace, security and progress in the region. This war in Iraq is being waged with the declared objective of security the implementation of Security Council resolutions.

19. As everyone acknowledges, the Middle East conflict must be resolved on the basis of resolutions 242 and 338 of the Security Council and the vision of two States – Palestine and Israel – living side by side in conditions of peace, justice and security. We look forward to concrete implementation of the positive intentions which have been announced for the Middle East. Equally, the dispute between Pakistan and India over Jammu & Kashmir must be resolved through implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions prescribing the exercise of the right of self-determination by the people of Jammu & Kashmir. The refusal of India to implement the Security Council resolutions, to refuse dialogue, to resort to repression of the Kashmiri people, and to threaten Pakistan with the use of force, should also be unacceptable to the United Nations and the international community.

Mr. President,

20. The failure to display and implement equity will accentuate the resentments and suspicions regarding the objectives of the current conflict. It will heighten the incidence of violence and terrorism; it will spread instability; it will erode the conduct of international relations on the basis of the principles of the UN Charter and international law.
Mr. President,

21. Whatever our views about the current conflict, we all realize that we are living through a defining moment in world history. The future of our countries and our peoples will depend considerably on the manner in which we respond to this crisis. Every crisis presents challenges; but it also opens up opportunities. Our response to this crisis must therefore be principled but wise, designed to construct a new world order for the 21st Century based on the principles of the UN Charter and the unrelenting quest of the human race for global peace, progress and justice.

I thank, you Mr. President.