



UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

(21st Septembre 2004)

91 rue de la Loi, 1040 Brussels

Good evening ladies and gentleman,

First of all, I would like to say that **I am so glad to be here commemorating and celebrating the International Day of Peace.**

Fortunately, and as Mr. Weightman has explained to us, in 2001, the General Assembly declared to observe the **21st September of each year as a day of Global Ceasefire and Non-violence, an invitation to all nations and people to ccess the hostilities during this Day.**

But in fact, **it is not only today when countries or people around the World should stop bombing or fighting against a community or against anybody.** The peace should exist always, anywhere...

And this is why **I cannot be happy at all.**

According to the SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) Yearbook 2004, in 2003 there were 19 major armed conflicts in 18 locations worldwide. Although it was the lowest number for the post-cold war period with the exception of 1997 -when 18 such conflicts were registered-, conflicts as the one between Iraq and the multinational coalition led by the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as the long-standing conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, without forgetting the conflicts taken place in Africa and in Asia, do not let us be satisfied.

Today there are also active conflicts around, and some of them are dramatic. I am talking about Darfur, in Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan, and others long-standing conflicts like the Palestine, for example. Last night the United Nations Security Council has passed a resolution threatening sanctions against Sudan's oil industry unless its government stops the violence in Darfur, and calling for a probe into human-rights abuses there.

Violence is not effective: it does not solve the problems, but it hides them and makes them bigger. If in the past the war could be considered not desirable, nowadays its consequences can be dramatic. We see it day after day, when the news of deaths arrive from Iraq or Sudan.

The exclusively military concept of security is proved to be so expensive in political, economical, cultural and humanitarian costs, as well as ineffective. Because there are no higher costs than those caused by a war, specially the costs of human lives.

Therefore, it is important to broaden the concept of security, because it involves not only the traditional aspects related to the order and the defence, but also, and more important, those that affect the human rights, the poverty, and everything related to the situation of human beings in the different regions throughout the world.

The global community, represented by international organisations such as United Nations or, more specially, by its General Assembly, needs to reinforce its capability to confronting the international crisis so as they do not lead to a war.

Here it is crucial to deep in the debate that is being held these days on the **reform of the Security Council**. It cannot be a reform thought for the benefit of some countries, but for the improvement of the global governance in the new century we are.

The United Nations must face its reform with the commitment of reinforcing its capability in the management of the international affaires that affect the entire planet population. It is important to deep in the effectiveness and transparency of some decisions, resolutions and other actions of the United Nations, as well as in the democratisation of its operation, the dotation of human resources, its economical means and so on.

Furthermore, we may look further **towards a shared security**. In this frame, we need to recognise the important steps done towards the development of the **International Law and the creation of International Court of Justice** that, however, needs to be improved.

In this context, the **European Union** needs to assume also its responsibility in the world, but never in competition with the United States...: it must equip itself with the necessary resources and reinforce its role in the humanitarian missions, peacekeeping or peace building operations, as in Afghanistan. Everything without forgetting that the basis is the preventive diplomacy, because **we need to solve conflicts by developing measures to prevent any dispute from arising**.

In fact, **preventive diplomacy** tries to resolve disputes before they escalate into conflicts or to limit the spread of conflicts when they occur. In particular, it may take the form of mediation, conciliation or negotiation. Early warning is an essential component of prevention, and the United Nations carefully monitors political and other developments around the world to detect threats to international peace and security, thereby enabling the Security Council and the Secretary-General to carry out preventive action.

There are several political measures for preventing and resolving conflicts, including: preventive deployment; preventive disarmament; development projects in the context of a prevention strategy and humanitarian action. These can involve, with the consent of the Government or Governments concerned a wide range of actions in the fields of **good governance, human rights and economic and social development**. So conflict prevention is one of the primary obligations of Member States set forth in the UN Charter.

In Europe we also need to highlight the importance of the rol of **Mr. PESC**, which needs to be developed. The European Union must improve its capability of establishing bridges between communities, promoting agreements, just the contrary that the doctrine of the clash of civilizations defends.

Let me finally say that, **as member of the European Parliament in the Commission on Culture and Education, I will make all the efforts so as the EP give its support to the International Day of Peace and recognize the need for human rights education as a key factor in bringing about peace, equality and tolerance throughout the world.** Because education should not only aim at forming trained, professional workers, but also at contributing to the development of individuals who possess the skills to interact in a society. Human rights education aims at providing pupils and students with the abilities to improve their quality of life and increase their capacity to participate in a decision making processes leading to social, cultural and economic policies.

Because as I see it, the key issue is the education for peace towards the instauration of a global peaceful regime.

Furthermore, from my seat in the European Parliament, I will support and promote all the initiatives to bring about a reduction in conflict as a mean to achieve the goal of democracy and peace in the world. From the military investment we should progress towards the investment in social development, and the same in the scope of investigation and research: more research in peace.

To sum up, the celebration of the International Day of Peace is also a unique opportunity to achieve a broader awareness among the global public opinion. I do believe that peace is not only an absence of war, it is also a positive concept that we need to build and to conquer every day.

Thank you very much,

Maria Badia Cutchet

Member of the European Parliament