**Mr. Kaddoumi**:

1. Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. Ping, on your election as President of the General Assembly during its fifty-ninth session.
2. We are confident that you will conduct the proceedings of this session with great competence.
3. I would like to pay tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Julian Robert Hunte, who so ably presided over the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly.
4. I would like to express at this time my deep appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General to harmonize international relations and ensure respect for the principles of the Charter and international law, with a view to strengthening international peace and security.
5. His statement before this Assembly marks a landmark in the quest for the rule of law and respect for the role of the United Nations in international conflicts.
6. In my statement, I will focus on the turbulent situation in the Middle East and, more specifically, on the core of the conflict in the Middle East.
7. The situation in the region of Western Asia — or the Middle East — is in turmoil.
8. The occupation of Iraq was founded on false pretexts, further damaging the already grave situation resulting from Israel’s policies and practices in occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories.
9. A total absence of law and order is now the general pattern of life in occupied Iraq.
10. This continued occupation is wreaking havoc on the economic and social aspects of life there.
11. We urge the competent institutions, namely the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council, to take the necessary and appropriate measures to ensure Iraq’s independence and sovereignty as soon as possible.
12. **Israel is the only nuclear Power in the Middle East.**
13. **It has approximately the fourth most powerful army in the world and is a sophisticated arms developer and dealer with no ethical or moral constraints and no concern for human rights.**
14. **The Israeli Government can therefore do anything it wishes, and it acts like a high-tech military expert and rogue State.**
15. **It has become tremendously useful for the United States, since it has strategically placed itself in the centre of the global arms industry.**
16. **Counting on the support of the United States, Israel breaks moral and international laws with impunity.**
17. **The daily assaults on peaceful Palestinian towns and villages — the demolition of homes and houses, the bulldozing and uprooting of age-old fruit-bearing olive and citrus trees, the targeted killings and assassinations, the closures, the imposition of a state of siege and curfews and the use of excessively disproportionate firepower, which has resulted, so far, in more than 3,200 deaths and thousands of injuries — are common knowledge.**
18. **We completely reject the allegation by Israel that this is carried out in self-defence.**
19. **The Palestinians under occupation, with their meagre means of combat, are the party exercising the right to self-defence.**
20. **Almost 8,000 Palestinians are being held without trial under merciless conditions, and when they protested against those conditions, an Israeli minister boasted, and I quote, “let them go on a hunger strike until they die”.**
21. **In addition to all the other methods Israel uses to obstruct peace, it holds our democratically elected President, Yasser Arafat, in confinement and has announced that they can find no partner with whom to negotiate peace.**
22. **With whom are the negotiations for settlement and peace to be negotiated, if not with the democratically elected President?**
23. **Israel, and others of the same mind, must wish to see a continuation of the status quo or to deal with an imposed — and not democratically elected — group or person.**
24. **The performance-based road map was unanimously backed by Security Council resolution 1515.**
25. **We have accepted the road map since, in our opinion, it augured well.**
26. **The road map envisaged a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and stated that the solution of the conflict “will only be achieved through an end to violence and terrorism, when the Palestinian people have a leadership acting decisively against terror and willing and able to build a practising democracy based on tolerance and liberty, and through Israel’s readiness to do what is necessary for a democratic Palestinian state to be established”.**
27. **The Palestinians, through their representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, embraced the road map and believes it offers another opportunity to end the conflict.**
28. **We hope that the Quartet will seriously assume the noble task of implementing the objectives of the road map.**
29. **Acts of State terrorism were Israel’s response to the performance-based road map.**
30. **To be more specific, a 2,000-pound bomb was dropped after the Palestinians scrupulously observed an unofficial ceasefire.**
31. **Israel still adheres to the 14 reservations it had regarding the road map.**
32. **The nebulous ideas and intentions revealed in the exchange of letters between President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon on the matter of the commitment to the road map are far from encouraging and keep the road map and Security Council resolution 1515 in limbo if not completely neglecting and rejecting them.**
33. **In his letter of assurance dated 14 April 2004 to Prime Minister Sharon, President Bush reiterates that “the United States supports the establishment of a Palestinian state that is viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent, so that the Palestinian people can build their own future in accordance with … the path set forth in the roadmap”.**
34. **However, when President Bush addresses the reality on the ground, he assures Israel that “it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949”.**
35. **He admits that as part of a final peace settlement, Israel must have secure and recognized borders, which should emerge from negotiations between the parties in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.**
36. **However, Mr. Bush and Mr. Sharon do not topographically identify the secure and recognized borders of Israel.**
37. **In the aforementioned letter of assurance, President Bush stresses that the United States is strongly committed to Israel’s security and well-being as a Jewish State.**
38. **He does not concern himself with the security of the so-called provisional State of Palestine.**
39. **He seems to be oblivious to the fact that 20 per cent of the citizens of Israel are non-Jewish and that Israel has not as yet defined who is a Jew.**
40. **This concept will inevitably lead to the creation of a racist society within the Israeli political entity.**
41. **To ensure the success of the road map and the achievement of its goal — a final and comprehensive settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by 2005 — the plan also requires that Israel “freezes all settlement activity” and “withdraws from Palestinian areas occupied from 28 September 2000”.**
42. **Commenting on the meeting between President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon, Javier Solana, European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, stated on 15 April 2004:**
43. **“The EU remains firmly committed to a negotiated settlement resulting in two viable, sovereign and independent States … as the only way to achieve a permanent peace and an end to the occupation that began in 1967, in the framework of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.**
44. **“EU heads of State or Government recently indicated that they would not recognize any change to the pre-1967 borders other than those arrived at by agreement between the parties.**
45. **A permanent settlement must also include an agreed, just, fair and realistic solution to the refugee issue”.**
46. **In order further to deviate from the direct route to the targeted destination, Sharon declared that he was absolutely determined to carry out disengagement in Gaza despite the political problems within his own party, the Likud.**
47. **Indeed, the party believes that disengagement conflicts with the Zionist aim of the creeping annexation of Palestinian territory.**
48. **Sharon’s plan creates a situation in which Israel will have to leave the settlements but will still control everything that enters and exits Gaza.**
49. **It will tightly seal off Gaza and block the only outlet that allows Palestinians in Gaza to cross into and from neighbouring Egypt.**
50. **All of this is a source of concern for the international community, as reflected in the number of meetings held by the General Assembly.**
51. **Israel did not heed the request by the Assembly in resolution ES-10/14, which, by necessity, called for an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice on the following question:**
52. **“What are the legal consequences arising from the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, as described in the report of the Secretary-General, considering the rules and principles of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions?”**
53. **The General Assembly, by an overwhelming majority of 150 votes, acknowledged the Court’s advisory opinion of 9 July 2004.**
54. **The representatives of the Governments of the United States of America and of Israel were among the six countries that voted against.**
55. **I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express our great appreciation for the learned opinion of the judges.**
56. **I wish to quote from the opinion, as it is of direct relevance to the General Assembly:**
57. **“All States are under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction;**
58. **“… The United Nations, and especially the General Assembly and the Security Council, should consider what further action is required to bring to an end the illegal situation** **resulting from the construction of the wall and the associated regime, taking due account of the present advisory opinion.”**
59. **In order to restore faith and confidence in the effectiveness of the United Nations and its Charter, I would appeal that the opinion of the Court be heeded and that action-oriented resolutions, including concrete mechanisms for implementation, be adopted and carried out.**
60. **The Palestinian people and leadership have demonstrated goodwill and accepted in good faith the provisions of the road map and other proposals leading to the termination of the Israeli occupation of our Palestinian territory, so that we in the Middle East can all live in peace and security and stability.**
61. **What is needed is for the other party, Israel, to commit itself to respond, in word and in deed.**

**Mr. Shalom**:

1. I would like to congratulate you, Sir, the Foreign Minister of Gabon, upon your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly and to wish you much success.
2. The United Nations was established out of the devastation of the Second World War in order to build a world of unity and of peace.
3. Today, 60 years after the Organization came into being, we must ask ourselves:
4. What are we united for and what are we united against?
5. Are we united for peace and security?
6. Are we united for fairness and justice?
7. Are we united against terror?
8. Are we united against tyranny?
9. Or are we, sadly, united only in cynical and immoral majority votes that make a mockery of the noble ideals on which this body was founded?
10. Tomorrow is Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, when all Jews stand before God to account for their actions.
11. It is an appropriate time for all nations, separately and together, to engage in such an accounting.
12. I sense a change in the world.
13. In the face of the global campaign of terror which has left no country free of its devastating impact, the world is beginning to realize what we in Israel have long known:
14. that terrorism is a challenge to humanity as a whole, not just to individual countries;
15. that the response to that global threat must also be global if it is to be effective;
16. that the threat of terrorism anywhere is a threat to freedom everywhere;
17. that fighting terror is crucial to our ability to bring peace.
18. There was a time when the problems of terror, Islamic fundamentalism and Iranian nuclear ambition were seen as local problems — Israel’s problems — not challenges which threatened the community of nations as a whole.
19. Today, however, our community of nations is more united than ever in the battle against terrorism, whose sole objective is to undermine everything that we seek to build: peace, stability, prosperity and opportunity for all.
20. Today we are also more united than ever in opposition to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
21. The international community now realizes that Iran — with missiles that can reach London, Paris, Berlin and southern Russia — poses a threat not only to the security of Israel, but to the security and stability of the whole world.
22. Indeed, Iran has replaced Saddam Hussein as the world’s number-one exporter of terror, hate and instability.
23. **The international community now also realizes, as reflected in Security Council resolution 1559, that Syria’s occupation of Lebanon and its support for Palestinian terror must end if our collective aspirations are to be fulfilled.**
24. And the international community now realizes that terror and tyranny are the twin enemies of the individual freedoms and human rights — including the right to life itself — which define our humanity.
25. Today, the community of nations knows that securing freedom and democracy for all the peoples of the world must be our collective goal.
26. The pictures of human flesh torn apart by the terrorists, from New York to Beslan — and just yesterday, once again, in Jerusalem — are waking us up to the challenge we face.
27. In that spirit of unity, and in the name of all those in the world who suffer from terror and tyranny, I call on the Assembly to refocus its aspirations and its priorities.
28. I call on the Assembly to end its obsession with Israel and to ensure that United Nations resources are allocated more equally and more effectively.
29. Our United Nations must provide solutions to the global challenges of hunger and poverty, of disease and weapons proliferation, of drug trafficking and sustainable development.
30. **We must not let the Palestinian desire to vilify Israel distract our global community from the obligation to address the needs of all peoples.**
31. I call on the Assembly to address head-on the active involvement of Iran and Syria in terrorism and Syria’s continued occupation of Lebanon.
32. There can be no place in the community of nations for those who promote the killing of children.
33. I call on the Assembly to promote practical measures to help nations cut off all financial and political lifelines of terror.
34. I call on the Assembly to address the growth of anti-Semitism and other forms of racism and intolerance.
35. I urge you, Mr. President, and the Secretary-General, to convene a special session of the Assembly on that crucial matter.
36. We all share the responsibility to educate our children to understanding and tolerance rather than to hatred and incitement.
37. We must build a united and global coalition to fight terrorism, racism and anti-Semitism.
38. We must build a united front against the cold-blooded murderers of our children.
39. In that battle, there is no middle ground.
40. There is no room for explanations or excuses.
41. There are no mitigating circumstances.
42. Declarations and condemnations are very important, but they are not enough.
43. Every nation, every Government, every leader has the responsibility to act.
44. Those who choose instead to support and sponsor terror must be isolated and held to account for their crimes.
45. **When I speak of terror and its dangers to life and freedom, I speak from bitter personal experience.**
46. **My own home town of Beersheva suffered a double suicide bombing just three weeks ago.**
47. **Sixteen innocent people were killed when their commuter buses were blown up.**
48. **In the middle of an important meeting with visiting officials, I rushed to call my mother and brother to check that they were alive.**
49. **Hamas, which operates freely from Palestinian territory and receives support and safe haven from the regimes in Damascus and Tehran, proudly claimed responsibility for that horrific attack.**
50. **Again yesterday, as I was meeting with the Secretary-General to discuss peace in the Middle East, I was passed a note informing me of a suicide atrocity, in which two more Israelis were blown to pieces by a Palestinian terrorist.**
51. **And this morning, once again, yet more Palestinian murderers took the lives of three young Israelis in an attack on Morag.**
52. **In the last year alone, 150 Israelis have been killed and thousands more injured in more than 40 separate suicide bombings and other cold-blooded attacks.**
53. **More than 200 additional suicide-bombing attempts were blocked by our defensive measures.**
54. **No Israeli mother is free of the fear that her child may be lost.**
55. **No Israeli child is immune to the terrorists’ plans.**
56. **In the name of God above and all humanity here on Earth, this killing must stop.**
57. **Palestinian terrorism is the key reason that the dream of peace in the Middle East has not yet become a reality.**
58. **Combating this terror is crucial to the prospects for peace in our region.**
59. **No peace initiative can survive if terrorists continue to enjoy a free hand to undermine it.**
60. **The road map recognizes this, calling, in phase one, for sustained Palestinian action against terror, the dismantling of terrorist organizations and the end of incitement in schools and the media.**
61. **Sadly, the current Palestinian leadership has refused to fulfil those fundamental obligations, preferring to blame Israel for all its failures.**
62. **The Palestinian side spends more energy fighting Israel here at the United Nations than it does fighting the terrorists in its own territory.**
63. **In the post-11-September world, this is not acceptable.**
64. **The Palestinians are not exempt from the imperatives of the global war on terror.**
65. **On the contrary, it is in their clear interest to join it.**
66. **To stand up against Hamas and Islamic Jihad is to stand up for Palestinian rights, not against them.**
67. **We urge the international community to recognize this reality and help the voices of reform and moderation within Palestinian society to emerge.**
68. **The future of the Palestinian people will be determined by the choices that the Palestinians and their leadership make on the ground.**
69. **The solutions — for the Palestinians and Israelis as one — lie in Gaza and Ramallah, not in The Hague or New York.**
70. **Israel is acting in both the diplomatic and the security arenas to deal with the consequences of this chronic failure of the Palestinian leadership.**
71. **On the diplomatic front, Israel accepted the road map in May 2003, and we remain committed to its realization.**
72. **At this time, however, we have no responsible Palestinian partner ready to join us in this effort.**
73. **Israel is now planning to implement the disengagement plan as a means of enhancing security and establishing a new, more promising platform for a return to negotiations.**
74. **We are in constant contact with the donor community and the World Bank in a joint effort to rebuild Gaza in the wake of Israel’s withdrawal.**
75. **On the security front, Israel is building a security fence to stop the unchecked wave of Palestinian attacks.**
76. **After 20,000 terrorist attacks, we deserve to protect our people.**
77. **No other country would act otherwise after 20, let alone 20,000, terrorist attacks.**
78. **The fence does not take lives.**
79. **It saves them.**
80. **Where there is a fence, there is no terror.**
81. **Where there is no fence, there is terror.**
82. **The modified route of the fence reflects the necessary balance between the security of our citizens and the welfare of the Palestinian population, as called for by Israel’s Supreme Court.**
83. **Most important, the fence is reversible.**
84. **The lives taken by terror are irreversible.**
85. **By helping take terrorism out of the equation, the fence contributes to the prospect of a return to negotiations and the realization of the road map’s vision of peace.**
86. **I call on the Assembly to acknowledge this truth and to reject the continued Palestinian effort to have delegations address Israel’s response to terrorism, instead of addressing the terrorism itself.**
87. **Ultimately, we need real contact and dialogue, based on mutual respect for the humanity of the other if we are to resolve the conflict in the Middle East.**
88. **The Government of Israel is ready for such contact.**
89. **We are ready to talk to any leadership — from Syria, Lebanon or the Palestinians — that comes to the table without terror and with the genuine intention of finding mutually acceptable solutions to our differences.**
90. Tomorrow, Yom Kippur, is a day of prayer, fasting and soul-searching for the Jews.
91. In Beersheva, in a synagogue named after my father, I will be praying together with those who have recently buried their murdered children.
92. I will pray that our collective aspiration for life and freedom will prevail over the terrorists and those who sponsor them.
93. I will pray that God will deliver peace on earth, for all humanity.
94. And I will pray that mankind can unite — through the United Nations — to help make this dream become a reality.
95. And I would like to say in Hebrew, Happy New Year.