

Réunion : Assemblée générale des Nations Unies

Date : 25 septembre 2013

Durée : 7'04'' (154 mots/minute)

Orateur : Mikheil Saakashvili, Président de la Géorgie

Difficulté : ***

Éléments à fournir :

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| L'orateur mentionne Viktor Yanoukovich, Président de l'Ukraine. Il mentionne aussi les régions de l'Abkhazie et de l'Ossétie du Sud. |
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Mr. President,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is a great honor to represent once again my beloved nation at this rostrum.

During the past decade, as I had the privilege to address this hall, Georgia has moved from a failed state to a market democracy.

We have experienced both advances and setbacks, both breakthroughs and mistakes. But the world has been able to witness the constant commitment to freedom of my nation.

I ask you today to once more hear the voice of a nation that transcends political, social, and religious differences in a common love for freedom.

A voice that - despite all the problems we have encountered and the challenges we still have to overcome - is full of hope.

And, looking at our world today, I do think that this voice of hope is needed.

The optimism of the early 1990s - when the spread of liberal and democratic values seemed natural - when the End of History had been proclaimed - and when the United Nations was set to become the heart and the soul of a world finally at peace - this optimism of the 1990s, when I was a student here in New York and I had the opportunity to be here as an intern at the United Nations, which was full of optimism, has been crushed by a wave of pessimism and cynicism.

The world is not at peace. Humankind has not reconciled with itself. And the UN did not become the soul or the heart of the united globe.

Western civilization, once triumphant, is now trying to tackle a deep economic, social, and mental crisis.

In Eastern Europe, the colored revolutions are challenged by the very forces they had defeated a few years ago.

In the Middle East, the glorious images of the cheering crowds of Cairo and Tunis have been replaced by the horrendous videos of the gassed children of Damascus.

There are many good reasons to be disillusioned.

But should the dogmatic optimism of the 90s be replaced by an equally dogmatic pessimism - by a sense of resignation that suffocates hope?

Should the fact that the expansion of democracy and freedom turns out to require profound struggle - should this lead us to renounce our beliefs and our principles?

I came here today to share the hopes on behalf of my nation, and to speak out on behalf of my Georgian people against this ambient fatalism.

I came here to address those who doubt, those who hesitate, those who are tempted to give in.

If the West is outdated, then why do millions of Poles, Czechs, Estonians, Romanians, and others cherish so much the day they entered NATO? And why are millions of Ukrainians, Georgians, Moldovans, and others desperately knocking on the doors of the European Union?

If freedom is no longer fashionable, how do we explain that the suicide of an unknown citizen in a remote Tunisian town has changed the map of the world?

No.

History did not come to an end in 1989 or 1991, as it was proclaimed, and it never will.

But freedom is still its motor and its horizon.

Everywhere, men and women who want to live in freedom are confronted by the forces of tyranny.

The question is: are we going to be actors or spectators in this confrontation?

Distinguished delegates,

As I speak, the Eastern European countries aspiring to join the European family of free and democratic nations are facing constant pressures and threats.

Armenia has been cornered, and forced to sign a customs union, which is not in this nation's interest or in the interest of our region, Moldova is being blockaded, Ukraine is under constant attack, Azerbaijan faces extraordinary pressure, and Georgia is occupied...

Why?

Because an old Empire is trying to reclaim its bygone borders. And "borders" is actually not the right word, since this Empire - be it the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation, or the Eurasian Union - never had borders. It only had margins.

I came today to speak in the name of these margins.

Unlike most nations, the Russian Federation has no interest in having stable states around it.

Neighboring countries in constant turmoil that is what the Kremlin is seeking.

It rejects the very idea of strong governments in Georgia, Ukraine, or Moldova, even ones that try to be friendly to their interests.

I was never a great fan of what the French call "La langue de bois", but as my second term nears its end, I feel more than before the urge to speak my mind.

So let us be very concrete.

Do you think that Vladimir Putin wants, for instance, Armenia to decisively triumph over Azerbaijan? No. This would make Armenia too strong and potentially too independent.

Do you think then that the contrary is true, that Moscow wants Baku to prevail over Erevan? Obviously not. The current rise of a modernized dynamic Azerbaijan is a nightmare for the Russian leaders.

No, they do not want anyone to prevail and the conflict itself is their objective, since it keeps both nations dependent and blocks their integration into the European common space.

Do you think that the electoral defeat of the forces that led the Orange Revolution in Ukraine has led the Kremlin to take a softer approach to this country?

To the contrary. I spoke yesterday to my colleague Viktor Yanoukovich. His government is under constant attack and pressure from Russia, and that's what is happening on a daily basis, and again ahead of the European Summit of Vilnius and Russian officials now speak openly about dismembering this nation. I just heard this speech two days ago.

Do you think the Kremlin would agree to discuss the de-occupation of our regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, now that the government has changed in Tbilisi? Far from it! The annexation of Georgian lands by Russian troops continues.

Yesterday, the occupants have expelled again Georgian citizens from their houses and are destroying them, are destroying their villages, homes and the houses of their parents and grand-parents. Taking in daylight their cemeteries in total impunity, water systems.

Despite the friendly statements made by the new Georgian government in the recent weeks and months, the Russian military keeps advancing its positions, dividing communities with new barbwire, threatening our economy, moving towards the vital Baku-Supsa pipeline, approaching more and more the main highway of Georgia and thus putting into question the very sustainability of our country.

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