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**Obama UN speech: all nations have responsibility to act**

**At the UN General Assembly, Obama said the US is ready to address global challenges such as nuclear proliferation. But the world cannot expect America to solve such problems alone, he said.**

By [Howard LaFranchi](#) | *Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor*

*UNITED NATIONS, N.Y.*

President Obama assured the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday that the era of a unilateralist America is over. But, he said, the ensuing era of cooperation in addressing the world's toughest challenges also requires a new sense of responsibility on the part of all nations.

In his first UN speech as president, Mr. Obama said the United States is ready to address challenges ranging from nuclear proliferation to global economic prosperity. Yet the world cannot expect America to figure out international challenges alone, he said.

"Make no mistake: This cannot be solely America's endeavor," he told a receptive General Assembly chamber. "Those who used to chastise America for acting alone in the world cannot now stand by and wait for America to solve the world's problems alone."

At the same time, Obama said, all nations have a role to play: "Now is the time for all of us to take our share of responsibility."

Obama's "responsibility" theme echoes one he has used extensively in addressing domestic issues as well. But at the UN, the call for responsible action received an immediate rebuff from Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi, who gave a rambling and at times incoherent speech in which he called the UN Security Council the "terror council" and belittled the UN as a dictatorship of the powerful.

Mr. Qaddafi's speech, which droned on for about 90 minutes, exemplified the challenge before Obama in seeking cooperative action from the 192-nation body. The speech also seems bound to reinforce disdain in the US for the UN.

"President Obama has a very difficult task ... if he expects to invest the UN with renewed credibility," says Christopher Preble, director of foreign studies at the Cato Institute in Washington. "The UN is a weak and fractured institution" of "limited power and credibility," he adds, saying that the US has been as responsible for that weakness as other countries.

In his speech, Obama pledged a new era of US multilateral action based on "four pillars" of major challenges: nonproliferation, peace and security, preservation of planet, and global prosperity.

On nuclear proliferation, Obama said, the next 12 months could be "pivotal": The UN is set to review the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty next year, and the US and Russia are poised to agree on further reductions in their arsenals. But the challenge posed by Iran's and North Korea's nuclear programs are

also part of the challenge, he said, and go to the heart of the "responsibility" of all nations to act in ways that solve the world's challenges.

"A world in which international demands are ignored will leave us all less safe," he said, referring to Iran and North Korea by name and to their flaunting of Security Council resolutions. "If nations put the pursuit of nuclear weapons ahead of the prosperity of their own people, then they must be held accountable," he added. "Treaties will be enforced."

Obama dedicated a large chunk of his speech to his efforts to find peace in the Middle East, placing resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the context of his theme global responsibility.

And he acknowledged his personal popularity around the world, but he insisted that the "expectations about my presidency are not about me" but about rejection of an unsatisfactory status quo in the world – and "the hope that real change is possible."

To underscore his theme, Obama quoted President Franklin D. Roosevelt, saying, "The structure of world peace cannot be the work of one man ... or one nation," but must be "the cooperative effort of the whole world."

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