

What World Leaders Said at the UN

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World leaders spoke this week at the United Nations General Assembly.

President Obama called on the leaders to speak out forcefully against what he called the politics of division and violence. He talked about the killing this month of Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans in Libya. He said the attack was "not simply an assault on America," but "on the very ideals upon which the United Nations was founded."

BARACK OBAMA: "If we are serious about those ideals, we must speak honestly about the deeper causes of the crisis. Because we face a choice between the forces that would drive us apart and the hopes we hold in common. Today, we must affirm that our future will be determined by people like Chris Stevens, and not by his killers."

Mr. Obama called the anti-Muslim video that incited violence in many countries "crude and disgusting" and an insult to Muslims and to the United States. But he defended the protection of free speech in America.

On the subject of Syria, he said the government of President Bashar al-Assad must come to an end.

BARACK OBAMA: "If there is a cause that cries out for protest in the world today, peaceful protest, it is a regime that tortures children and shoots rockets at apartment buildings."

Mr. Obama said the time for a diplomatic solution with Iran over its nuclear program is not unlimited. He said the United States will do what it must to prevent Iran from having a nuclear weapon.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said time is running out.

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU: "There is only one way to peacefully prevent Iran from getting atomic bombs -- and that's by placing a clear red line on Iran's nuclear weapons program. [Applause] Red lines don't lead to war, red lines prevent war."

The Israeli leader used a cartoon-like image of a bomb to show that a red line must be drawn on Iran's ability to enrich uranium.

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU: "And by next spring, at most by next summer, at

current enrichment rates, they will have finished the medium enrichment and moved on to the final stage."

President Obama and Prime Minister Netanyahu spoke by telephone on Friday.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas accused Israel of letting settlers carry out "a campaign of ethnic cleansing" against his people. He and other leaders in this story are heard through an interpreter.

MAHMOUD ABBAS (INTERPRETER): "Israel refuses to end the occupation and refuses to allow the Palestinian people to attain their rights and freedom, and rejects the establishment of the state of Palestine."

Egypt's new president, Mohamed Morsi, made his first speech to the General Assembly. He said the most important issue facing the world is the need to settle the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

On the conflict in Syria, President Morsi urged the opposition to propose a united vision of a democratic change of power.

MOHAMED MORSI (INTERPRETER): "After this regime comes to an end, the Syrian people will choose, with their own free will, a regime that represents it and places Syria in its right place among democratic countries."

Burma's President Thein Sein also spoke to the General Assembly.

THEIN SEIN (INTERPRETER): "Myanmar should be viewed from a different and new perspective."

The former general said his country is on an unstoppable path toward democracy. The United States said this week that it will begin easing restrictions on the import of Burmese products.

And Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad avoided most of his usual attacks on the United States and Israel. This was Mr. Ahmadinejad's eighth and final message to the General Assembly.

And that's IN THE NEWS in VOA Special English. I'm Steve Ember.

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