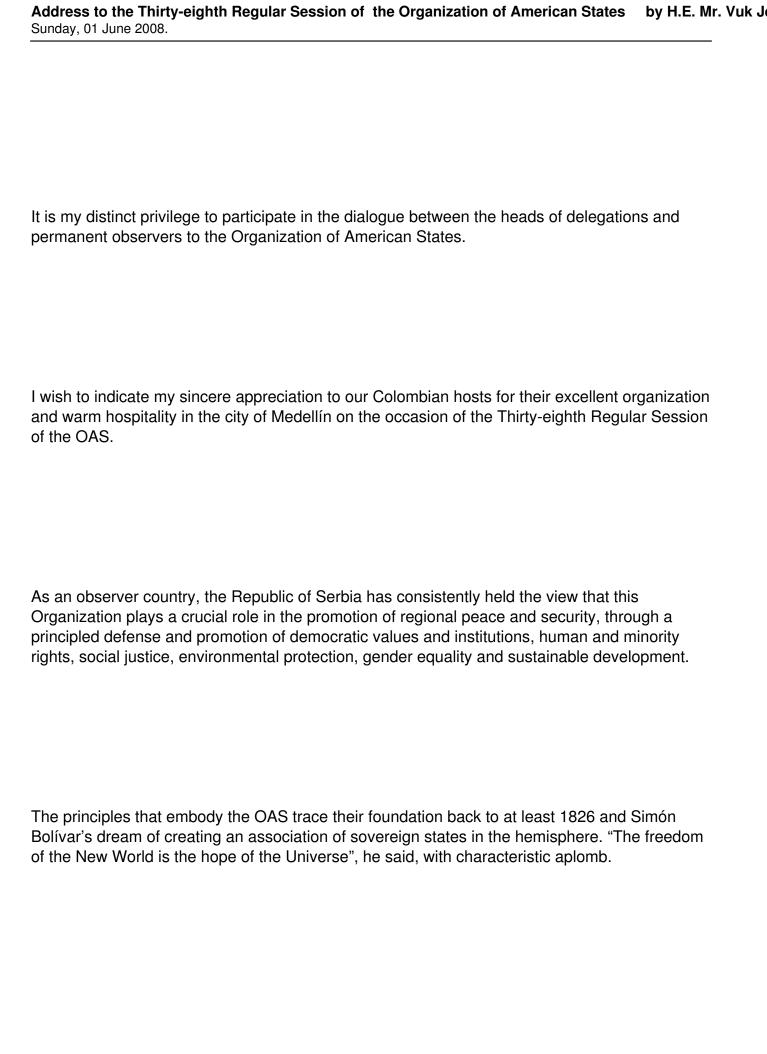
Ladies and Gentlemen,



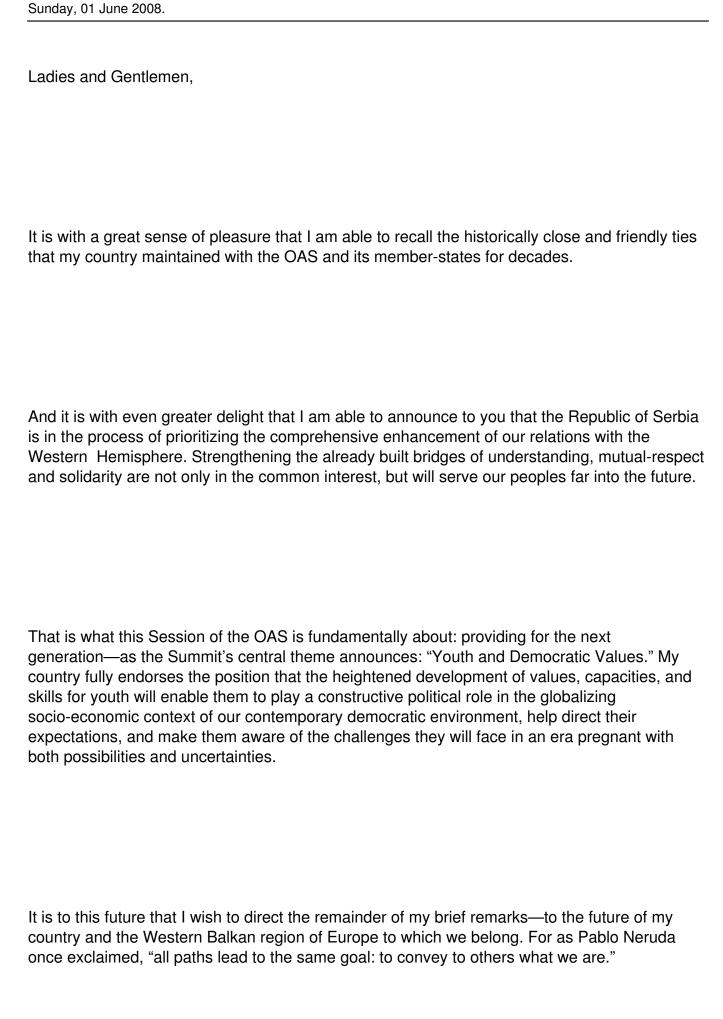
the 1948 adoption in Bogota of the Charter of the Organization of American States and the	This Bolivarian hope, this quest for freedom, and this dream of establishing an inter-American
American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, the first international expression of the	system in which each sovereign state is equal to the others, assumed more concrete form with
,	the 1948 adoption in Bogota of the Charter of the Organization of American States and the
	American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, the first international expression of the universal principles of human rights.

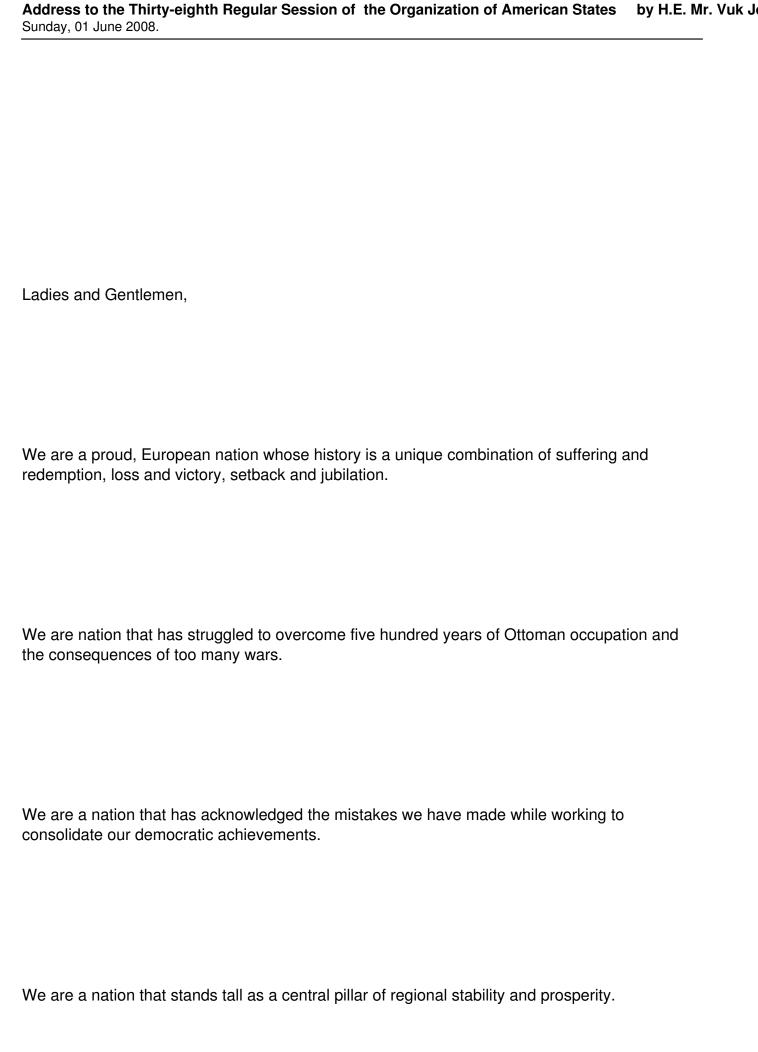
In the intervening decades, the OAS has grown into a regional organization that places democracy at the cornerstone of its mission. As the landmark Inter-American Democratic Charter—adopted on a date weighty of significance, September 11th, 2001—plainly declares: "The peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it."

Ladies and Gentlemen,

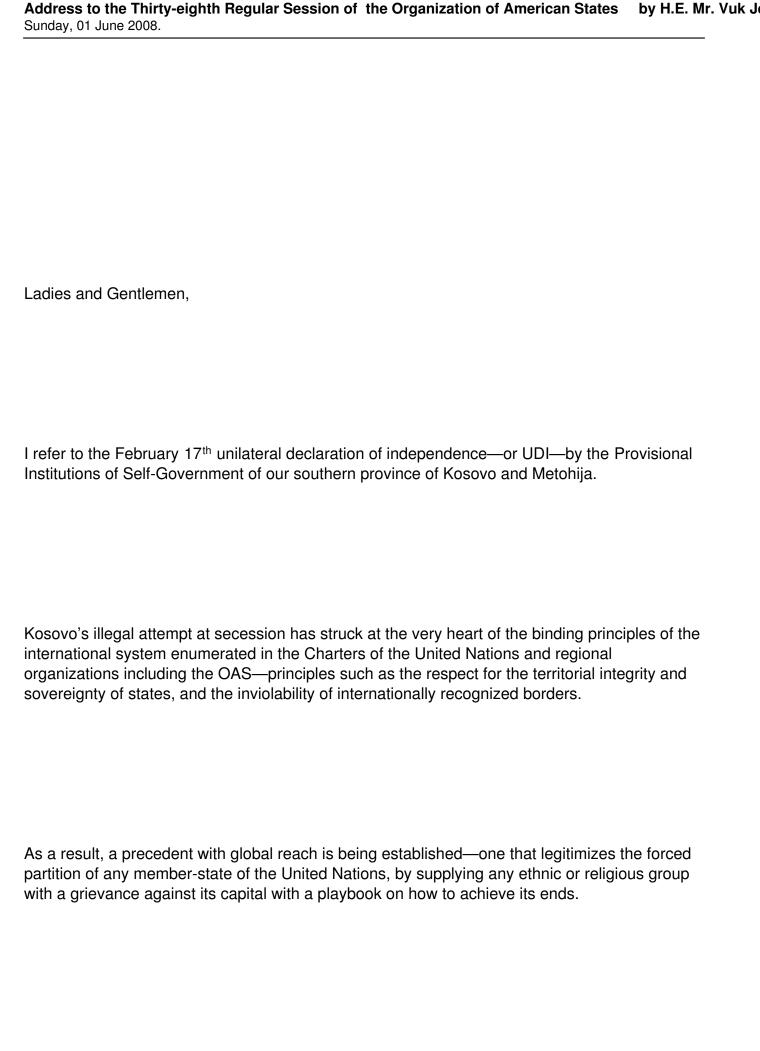
As a country firmly pursuing the path to membership in the European Union and the values that stand at its foundation, the Republic of Serbia shares your commitment to the centrality of democracy. We too believe that it is the indispensable ingredient to the achievement of stability, peace, and security in our region. And we express solidarity with your conviction that democracy is not the mere holding of elections. It is about the effective exercise of fundamental freedoms and human rights in their universality, indivisibility, and interdependence.

And democracy is about the eradication of all forms of discrimination. It is about social and economic development, good governance, the rule of law, and reconciliation. It is about the promotion of civil society, and the fight to eliminate poverty. It is about multidimensional security. And it is about planning for the future by placing critical emphasis on the importance of providing a good education for the generations to come.
In short, democracy is about substance, not just procedures. It is about institutions, not just words on parchment. And it is about responsibilities, not just rights.
Democracy is a heavy burden for each to bear. But it has become indispensable to our identity. As a founder of <i>modernismo</i> once wrote, "there is no burden heavier than that of a conscious life."
In this consists the heavy burden—and the nobility—of democracy: experiencing every fulfilling moment of our conscious existence.





Address to the Thirty-eighth Regular Session of the Organization of American States by H.E. Mr. Vuk J. Sunday, 01 June 2008.
That is what we are—a nation that seeks the guidance of our traditions while looking to the future with "burning patience", as one of our poets termed it.
And that future is in Europe.
Serbia has an appointment to keep with Europe.
And we intend to keep it.
Yet there remains a potential obstacle on the road to Europe which, if not dealt with in the right way, could slow or even reverse the tremendous progress that has been made throughout the Western Balkans.



This precedent also legitimizes unilaterally imposing solutions to ethnic conflicts. It legitimizes the act of unilateral secession by sub-state actor. It transforms the right to self-determination into an avowed right to independence. And it violates the commitment to the peaceful and consensual resolution of disputes in Europe.
Ladies and Gentlemen,
The Republic of Serbia has ruled out the use of force, in line with our commitment to the peaceful resolution of Kosovo's future status, and the values of the EU we are on course to join.
Instead, we will continue to make full use of our diplomatic, political and legal arsenal. To that end, Serbia intends to put a resolution before the General Assembly of the United Nations in September that would ask the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion on the legality of Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence.

In the name of the Republic of Serbia, I ask you, the member-states of the OAS, to maintain your reservation on the Kosovo issue while the International Court of Justice deliberates on this crucial question.
This is the only way to avoid doing any further damage to the legitimacy of the international system and the universality of the values we hold in common.
And it is the only way to re-open the window of opportunity behind which stands the prospect of a negotiated, compromise solution to the future status of Kosovo acceptable to all the stakeholders.
It is the key to securing the full integration of the Western Balkans into the European Union—a goal shared by all in the region.
In the name of consolidating a more hopeful, democratic future for all who live in our province of Kosovo as well as in the rest of Serbia, and throughout the region, I ask for your support for the resolution we will submit to the United Nations General Assembly in September .

ddress to the Thirty-eighth Regular Session of the Organization of American States unday, 01 June 2008.	by H.E. Mr. Vuk
nis is a moment for strategic thinking, bold ideas and legitimate solutions. Let us togo ake that moment come true.	ether
hank you for your attention.	