



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations

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STATEMENT

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY
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PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER IN-CHIEF
OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

DURING

THE

GENERAL DEBATE

OF THE

**63RD SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to first congratulate you, Mr. President on your election to the Presidency of the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

This assembly is taking place at a time of great global challenges such as the energy crisis, high food prices and instability in the financial markets. These are serious problems that could erode the gains the world economy has made in the last **ten** years.

Let me also add that our gathering here also provides a window of opportunity for us to review the progress we have made, individually and collectively, in fulfilling the **Millennium Development Goals**.

Nevertheless, before proceeding with my remarks, I wish to first of all update you on the progress Kenya has made following the challenges we faced soon after the general elections held in **December 2007**.

Kenyans, fellow Africans, and the international community held on to the hope that our country would obtain a peacefully negotiated outcome to the political crisis.

This hope was realized on **28th February, 2008** with the signing of the National Accord and Reconciliation Agreement. The Accord paved way for the establishment of a Grand Coalition Government representing all major political parties and interests in our country.

The Government is making use of this historic window of opportunity to build consensus that will enable us to address the major challenges facing our nation.

We are for instance making good progress towards implementing far-reaching legal, constitutional, and policy reforms that will entrench national cohesion and meet the political, economic, and social aspirations of our people.

I am confident that over the past few months, Kenya has regained its glory and redeemed its image as a peaceful nation, a safe tourist and investment destination, and as the regional hub for peace and humanitarian efforts.

I wish on behalf of all Kenyans, to express our profound gratitude for the engagement and support of all our friends.

In this connection, I wish to pay special tribute to Members of the Panel of Eminent African Personalities led by the former U.N. secretary general Dr. **Kofi Annan**, the African Union, and the United Nations.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. **Ban Ki-moon** for his personal and constant support.

As Africa grapples with the challenges of competitive elections in fragile democracies divided by regional, racial, religious and ethnic differences, time has come for us to reflect on the role of competitive electoral processes in the building of our nascent democratic institutions.

Indeed, the challenge of attaining democratic and inclusive elected governments is at the core of prevailing conflicts and insecurity in many parts of Africa.

In **Sudan**, for example, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) continues to hold three years later despite the challenges. I welcome the efforts made by the parties to the CPA in overcoming some recent difficulties. I urge them to intensify their efforts in addressing all outstanding issues in the implementation of the accord.

On the other hand, the situation in **Somalia** remains fragile. This is mainly because the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia has still not received full support from the international community.

While I pay tribute to the Governments of **Uganda** and **Burundi** for providing troops as part of the African Union Mission to **Somalia**, I urge the deployment of the remaining troops to strengthen the mission.

I further urge the United Nations and the international community to assume a greater responsibility in **Somalia**, so as to ensure the emergence of a stable and democratic country.

With regard to the Great Lakes, tremendous progress has been made in promoting peace, while reducing conflict in the region. The conclusion of the **Pact on Security, Stability and Development** in the Region has given impetus to our efforts.

However, the implementation of the Pact faces challenges due to renewed tension and hostilities. I call upon all those involved to embrace the Pact and seek peaceful resolution to current problems. We must not derail our goals of achieving economic development and regional integration in the Great Lakes. The Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development that we all agreed upon is now operational. I appeal to the international community to contribute to the Fund. It is a crucial pillar for the promotion of peace and development in the Great Lakes region.

Mr. President,

Coming back to the food crisis I mentioned at the beginning of my speech, our meeting is taking place at time when Africa and many other parts of the world are facing a severe food shortage.

I am therefore happy to note that the theme of the general debate, "*The impact of the global food crisis on poverty and hunger in the world as well as the need to democratize the United Nations*," is paying particular attention to this important subject.

Indeed, while food prices have risen globally, their impact has been most severe and adverse on the poorest people living in developing countries. The continued rise in food prices has national security implications for most developing nations.

In the immediate future therefore we must, as members of the United Nations, find mechanisms to deliver sufficient quantities of affordable food to poor people in Africa and other parts of the developing world.

In the medium term, we must also address the issues of agricultural productivity, particularly in terms of making available better yielding seed varieties, modern farming techniques, and cheaper fertilizer to smallholder farmers in Africa.

This will require more effective global partnerships between developed nations, international institutions, and developing nations. In particular, these partnerships should place food security, agricultural technology development and transfer, trade and agricultural credit at the centre of the development agenda.

Indeed, the most equitable way of lifting Africa's people out of poverty and underdevelopment is through widespread commercialization of agriculture. We must focus on manufacture and trade in value added agricultural products, supported by efficient financial services and markets.

In this regard, the global community should hasten consensus on agriculture and other contentious issues, so as to enable the successful conclusion of the **Doha Development Round** of the **World Trade Organisation**.

On the issue of escalating global oil prices, I wish to make a passionate appeal to oil-producing nations to consider the plight of non oil-producing nations, especially those in the developing world.

There is need to address the problem of speculative trading in the oil futures market that has seen the doubling of prices in the last one year.

Indeed, the rapid increase in oil prices is hurting developing countries the most, and does not augur well for international peace and stability. We should all be conscious of the fact that we are one global community, and none of us is completely insulated from instability caused by inflationary pressures that result from the high oil prices.

Mr. President,

We have over the years discussed the need for a more effective and accountable United Nations that will enable us to address the emerging and persistent global challenges such as climate change, international security, poverty, conflicts and economic disparities.

Towards this end, reform at the Security Council is imperative. We need to ensure that its composition reflects equitable geographical representation of the entire United Nations membership. Africa therefore deserves permanent representation on the Security Council.

Reforms are also needed in other areas. We are convinced that strengthening the Economic and Social Council will enable the organ to reassert its authority and capacity to promote greater coherence and coordination with the multilateral financial institutions, the World Trade Organization and other U.N. bodies.

I would like to congratulate the Secretary-General for his continued focus on the Millennium Development Goals and in particular, the establishment of the MDG's Africa Steering Group which has among other interventions, proposed the launching of an African Green Revolution.

I look forward to the insights and recommendations that will come out of the High-Level Event on MDGs later this week.

Finally, Mr. President, I wish to note that the challenges facing us today, such as the global food crisis, attaining the MDGs, and climate change more than ever before require coordinated global and multilateral cooperation.

A more effective and accountable United Nations is therefore needed to meet and overcome these challenges.

I thank you for your attention and God Bless you all.