



MAURITIUS

STATEMENT

BY

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Mr. President,

I congratulate you on your election as President of the Sixty-Fifth Session of the General Assembly and thank your predecessor H.E. Dr. Ali Treki for the excellent stewardship of the Sixty-Fourth Session. I seize this opportunity to convey to you the warm greetings of Dr. the Hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius.

Mr. President,

We are meeting this year against the backdrop of the triple-blow of food, fuel and financial crises which have significantly slowed the social and economic progress of many, particularly that of developing countries.

Although we are now witnessing signs of gradual recovery, we are nonetheless alive to the fact that the world is still mired in the consequences of the recession.

These crises have exposed the deficiencies of the international financial and governance structure and made us realise that the pre-crisis status quo has to be challenged if we are to ensure a better future for our people. While we acknowledge the pre-eminent role that the G-20 is playing in addressing the financial and economic crisis, the widening and acceleration of global integration and interconnectedness, dictate the necessity for the democratisation of the international economic and financial decision-making processes to ensure that the future development of our global economy is balanced and equitable.

It was therefore reassuring to hear the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Mr. Dominique Strauss-Kahn stating last Monday and I quote *"To regain the momentum, we need a sense of shared responsibility between the various actors – the developing countries themselves, the advanced economies, and the international institutions."*

Mr. President,

The statistics are eloquent regarding the negative impact of the multitude of crises on the progress achieved on the MDGs. As the global economic output declined, the ranks of the poor swelled with the newly poor.

A week ago, from this very rostrum an impressive number of World Leaders reaffirmed their commitments to the Millennium Development Goals. In our drive to enable the less fortunate to lead a dignified life, it is imperative to

have closer cooperation and collaboration between government, civil society and the private sector supplemented by innovative thinking, cutting-edge knowledge and path-breaking initiatives.

Mr. President,

Success in achieving the MDGs is inextricably linked to the broader agenda of climate change. The effects of climate change and global warming threaten the very implementation of the MDGs. Whilst climate change is affecting all countries, it is abundantly clear that Small Islands and low lying and coastal States are the most affected by its consequences.

We therefore urge that SIDS should be given simplified access to financing from both the USD 30 billion of Fast Start Funding pledged in the Copenhagen Accord and similar accessibility to longer term funds proposed for the Copenhagen Green Fund. Those adaptation fundings should be in the form of grants and not loans.

We hope that the forthcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference to be held in Cancun later this year will build on the 2009 Copenhagen Accord to ultimately arrive at a legally binding agreement on limits to green house gas emissions based on the principle of common but differentiated capabilities and responsibilities as well as the establishment of mitigation and adaption funds.

Let us therefore, join our efforts and not miss the opportunity because a world which is "climate-smart" is within reach if we act now, act together and act differently.

Mr. President,

In its efforts to contribute towards the global momentum to attain a low carbon future Mauritius is implementing the "Maurice Ile Durable" project which aims at protecting the environment and minimizing dependence on fossil fuels through increased utilization of renewable energy and a more efficient use of energy in general.

Mr. President,

The High Level Meeting on the Review of the Mauritius Strategy re-emphasized the fact that due to their inherent specificity, SIDS should be recognized as a distinct category of countries and deserves special treatment,

particularly in accessing official development assistance and concessionary funding. The present GDP criterion applied to graduate Least Developed Countries to Middle Income is most unfair to Small Island Developing States since it does not take into account the unique vulnerabilities of these States.

Mr. President,

The time has come for a shift in how we think of development. We need to articulate strongly a new development paradigm.

One where developing countries are part and parcel of the solution to create a more vibrant world economy in this truly multipolar world.

We therefore look forward to the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round at the earliest possible. It is also crucial to close the gaps in the provision of Aid for Trade to support the building of supply capacity which lies at the core of development.

At the sub-regional level, in its capacity as the new chair of the Indian Ocean Commission, Mauritius will continue to lay greater emphasis on the creation of an economic and commercial space, the implementation of a regional strategy on fisheries and aquaculture, the promotion of a regional tourism label in traditional and emerging markets, and the development of a comprehensive regional anti-piracy programme.

Mr. President,

A fundamental precondition for socio-economic development rests on a process of social inclusivity - with the human rights at its core. As a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Mauritius is firmly committed to the safeguard and protection of the human rights both at the national and international level. In this regard, we unreservedly condemn the serious human rights violations committed by warring factions in conflict zones where the vulnerable members of the society particularly children and women are being targeted.

At the national level, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission has started the challenging task of compiling a report on slavery and indentured labour in Mauritius during the colonial period.

Mauritius continues to be preoccupied with the fate of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi whose heroic and unbreakable determination and

steadfastness to free her people from years of subjugation is praiseworthy. Depriving Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi of the right to stand as a candidate in the forthcoming general elections scheduled in November this year is considered by my delegation as the deprivation of the basic rights of the people of Myanmar to freely choose to whom they would wish to entrust the destiny of their country.

Mr. President,

Democracy and the rule of law are essential elements for the development, stability, security and prosperity of any country. The world has made significant strides in this respect. Nonetheless, it is regrettable that conflicts in certain parts of the world continue to undermine progress. The imperatives of a globalizing world require the international community to remain seized and not to shirk its responsibilities on these issues.

In the Indian Ocean region, Mauritius is particularly preoccupied with the current political impasse prevailing in our neighbour country - Madagascar. We are actively engaged at the levels of the SADC, African Union, and the Indian Ocean Commission in assisting Madagascar to find a peaceful solution to the political crisis.

In this regard, we wish to state that we are supportive of the initiative led by the *Coordination Nationale des Organisations de la Société Civile* to organise an inter-Malagasy dialogue in order to find a *Malagacho-Malgache* solution to the crisis in Madagascar. And we sincerely hope that the dialogue will be credible, transparent and include all sections of the Malagasy society in the search for durable peace in the interest of both the country and the region. Mauritius has offered its assistance for the setting up of a SADC liaison office in Madagascar in order to provide support in moving the *Malagacho-Malgache* dialogue.

Mr. President,

Two decades of civil unrest has inflicted untold miseries and difficulties to the Somali people and rendered governance of the country almost impossible.

We commend IGAD for its efforts to promote peace and security in Somalia through the Transitional Government. We believe that the people of Somalia deserve higher commitment of the international community with a view to restoring law and order inside the country and also to put an end to the piracy problem off the coast of Somalia.

Mr. President,

To promote a more proactive engagement of the countries of the region in the fight against piracy, Mauritius will host the Second Ministerial Conference on Piracy next month in collaboration with the European Union, the Indian Ocean Commission and COMESA on 6 and 7 October. Mauritius is also envisaging the possibility of trying piracy suspects caught in the Indian Ocean, with adequate logistical, infrastructural and financial support of the international community.

Mr. President,

The current process for talks between Israelis and Palestinians has given renewed hope for lasting peace through the creation of an independent sovereign Palestinian State existing side by side with the State of Israel within secured and recognized borders.

Mauritius has always supported the legitimate and inalienable right of the Palestinian people to live in peace and security in an independent Palestinian State. We therefore commend President Barak Obama for his initiatives and leadership for enabling the direct talks between President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu.

Mr. President,

Global governance in the maintenance of international peace and security will remain incomplete so long as we do not achieve a comprehensive reform of the United Nations Security Council - a reformed Security Council that meets and responds to the geopolitical realities of the twenty first century. In this respect, Mauritius fully supports the Common African Position, as enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. We reiterate our support for India, the largest democracy, as permanent member in a reformed Security Council, we also support a Latin American and Caribbean country as permanent member in the Security Council.

Mr. President,

We have in no uncertain terms drawn the attention of this august body every year to the fact that Mauritius has sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia. The Chagos Archipelago was illegally excised by the United Kingdom from the territory of Mauritius prior to our independence. This dismemberment was done in blatant violation of the UN

General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and 2066 (XX) of 16 December 1965.

We have raised the issue of the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago with successive British Governments and initially pursued the matter as a friendly dispute. In view of the lack of progress, we suggested that the issue be addressed in bilateral talks. Although the process of bilateral talks was initiated in January 2009, the issue of our sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago has yet to be addressed.

We are deeply concerned that the British Government decided on 1 April 2010 to unilaterally declare a marine protected area around the Chagos Archipelago allegedly to protect the marine environment. The unilateral establishment of this marine protected area infringes the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago and constitutes a serious impediment to the eventual resettlement in the Archipelago of its former inhabitants and other Mauritians as any economic activity in the protected zone would be precluded. The Government of Mauritius has decided **not to** recognize the existence of the marine protected area.

The illegal excision of the Chagos Archipelago from the territory of Mauritius has indeed a tragic human dimension. All the inhabitants of the Archipelago at that time were forced by the British authorities to leave their homes in the Archipelago abruptly in total disregard of their human rights. Most of them were moved to the main island of Mauritius. The Government of Mauritius is sensitive to and fully supportive of the plight of the displaced inhabitants of the Chagos Archipelago and to their desire to resettle in their birthplace in the Chagos Archipelago.

Mauritius greatly appreciates the unflinching and unanimous support it has consistently received from the African Union and the Non-Aligned Movement for assertion of its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago. The last AU Summit held in Kampala last July and the last NAM Summit held in July 2008 in Sharm-el-Sheik reaffirmed that the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia, forms an integral part of the territory of the Republic of Mauritius. They also called upon the United Kingdom to expeditiously put an end to its **unlawful occupation** of the Chagos Archipelago with a view to enabling Mauritius to effectively exercise its sovereignty over the Archipelago.

We urge the United Kingdom once again to take the necessary steps for the **unconditional** return of the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia, to Mauritius without further delay.

Mr. President,

In our annual statement, we have also reaffirmed the sovereignty of Mauritius over Tromelin Island. The Governments of Mauritius and France have reached an agreement earlier this year on the co-management of the island and its maritime zones without prejudice to the sovereignty of Mauritius over Tromelin. This is considered to be a first and positive step towards the resolution of the sovereignty issue.

Monsieur le Président,

La République de Maurice est un creuset de civilisations et de cultures. Nous sommes fiers d'être un havre de paix où coexiste pacifiquement une population issue de diverses souches et traditions. Le peuple mauricien s'est inspiré de la philosophie de l'interculturalité et a assumé ses différences comme source de richesse humaine.

De par notre vision énoncée par le tryptique 'Unité, égalité, modernité', nous avons pris l'engagement de placer l'homme au centre de tout développement dans notre société plurielle; une société basée sur la diversité, le respect des spécificités culturelles, la non-discrimination et le partage des valeurs communes.

L'Organisation des Nations Unies est la tribune par excellence pour un dialogue interculturel. Mon pays jouera pleinement son rôle dans le concert des nations afin que chaque être humain puisse avoir la considération et le respect qui lui revient.

Mr. President,

Finally I should like to reaffirm Mauritius unwavering faith in the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace, security and development.

I thank you for your attention.