



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations

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STATEMENT

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY HON. UHURU KENYATTA, C.G.H.,
PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE
DEFENCE FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

DURING

THE

**GENERAL DEBATE - UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

September 24, 2014
United Nations, New York

Check against Delivery

Hon. Mr. Sam Kutesa, President of the 69th Session of United Nations General Assembly,

H. E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations,

Excellencies Heads of State and Government,

1. It is a great pleasure to be here at this 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.
2. As the current Chairman of the **East Africa Community**, I am particularly pleased to see the **Hon. Sam Kutesa**, preside over the General Assembly.
3. I assure you, Mr. President, of the full support of my government during your Presidency.

Mr. President,

4. I would like to lend my voice to all those who are calling for urgent and sustained attention to the devastating Ebola crisis in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. Beyond the tragedy of the thousands who have lost lives and loved ones, and the many more living with this threat, livelihoods and businesses have collapsed and aspirations for shared prosperity continue to shrink day by day. Kenya stands in solidarity with the countries affected by this devastating virus.
5. Earlier this month, the Kenyan people gave \$1 million to the effort to bring the crisis under control. We stand ready to do more.
6. Last week, ministers of health from the East African region converged in Nairobi and agreed on measures to safe guard our populations and ensure the virus does not spread in our region.
7. The suspension of international flights into Monrovia and other affected capitals, Mr. President, including by Kenya Airways, followed a stark warning from the World Health Organization.
8. These measures, among others, have isolated the affected countries and further hurt the people and economies of the region.

9. With regard to Kenya our intention was not to do harm, but as a regional hub, the warning from the WHO left us few options. We now stand ready to resume Kenya Airways flights once appropriate measures are put in place. Kenya believes that nothing in the immediate future requires a more urgent and determined response from the international community than the effort to stop and contain this devastating virus.

10. I therefore welcome the establishment of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) by the Secretary General, which I am sure, will guide a collective global response.

Mr. President,

11. The Ebola crisis underlines the imperative to build strong States that can withstand crisis and respond to emergencies. State weakness in many African countries comes from a history of development paradigms and practices that weakened the state. We must commit to build strong, resilient and accountable states that can effectively response to shocks, adversities and emergencies in the future.

Mr. President,

12. You preside over a General Assembly of historic significance to humanity. The 69th Session will oversee the development and adoption of the **Post-2015 Development Agenda**. This effort will build on the work of the General Assembly Open Working Group, which developed the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, Kenya is proud to have been at the forefront of driving the open working group process.

Mr. President,

13. The new world development agenda must address itself to the entire cross-section of social, economic and environmental challenges that face the world in the 21st century.

14. Issues of sustained economic development, equality between nations, climate change, industrialization, biodiversity loss and environmental protection, must now go hand

in glove with the traditional challenges of poverty, disease, hunger and inequality within nations.

15. This new agenda must therefore be universal and comprehensive and responsive to all nations equally in order to be transformative in its impact.

16. We in Kenya recognize however that a number of obstacles stand in the way of achieving this new development agenda; the most immediate of these are terrorism and violent extremism. In Kenya, we stand at a critical moment. As we deepen our democracy, we find our nation thrust into the frontline of a regional and global war against terror.

17. We have become acutely aware that the interplay between democratization on the one hand, and effective counter-terrorism on the other, presents severe challenges to our security and our governance institutions. Increasingly, terrorist actors are exploiting the expanded democratic space, sometimes feeding into and even influencing local politics. Unless we can provide an effective buffer to fight back this tendency, Kenya and indeed other countries will find it difficult to entrench democracy and the **post-2015 development agenda**.

Mr. President,

18. Besides this immediate threat of terrorism, the state of economic and social wellbeing is also affected by the lack of sustainable peace and security in many of our countries. From the Central African Republic, to Mali, Libya, and even as far afield as the Middle East and Europe, we see new conflicts and crises, which could derail or delay development. In Kenya, we are particularly concerned by the perennial fragility that has come to characterize the Greater Horn of Africa.

19. In Somalia, Kenya continues to sacrifice lives and resources in an effort to bring peace to our neighbour. We do this trusting that the international community will stay the course in Somalia. This involves consolidating peace, investing in stable, responsive national institutions that guarantee public safety, promote democracy and civil liberties as well as

development and peace in the country and the region.
Mr. President,

20. As we meet here, South Sudan remains in turmoil. Kenya and other IGAD countries have invested considerable effort to end this tragedy and spare the people of South Sudan further suffering. Regrettably, however, progress has been slow.

Mr. President,

21. We cannot let this young nation and its people down. At this assembly, I make a special plea for South Sudan, for no nation has, over the years, suffered as much neglect from the international community.

22. Similarly, no country today remains as desperately in need of rapid and transformative economic and social development, as South Sudan. We cannot allow a return to the political chaos, to economic collapse or social desperation.

23. I implore the leaders of this young nation to demonstrate determined and enlightened leadership and to make peace without further delay. Such action will save the people of this nation enormous suffering, and offer hope of a better future. I thank the United Nations Security Council for its continued cooperation with IGAD in the search for peace in South Sudan.

24. It is this concert of action that will help bring lasting peace, which, in turn, will form the basis for a transformative **Post-2015 agenda** for **South Sudan** and its neighbours.

Mr. President,

25. On the continent of Africa the development model of the past 50 years has run its course. This outmoded model was defined by negative trade relations, paternalistic global governance regimes and an over reliance on Official Development Assistance (ODA). Moreover it was driven by external prescriptions for development that were heavy on political instruction but light on economic and social transformation.

26. We now know better Mr. President. We know that our social and economic transformation shall come first from within our nations, our region and our continent and only secondly from the compliment of external ideas and resources. Equally important, these external contributions must recognize the primacy of our aspirations and ideas. They must

value and safe guard, rather than simply exploit and consume our domestic resources and the product of our people's labour.

27. For the **post-2015 Development Agenda** to be transformative, therefore, it must first embrace the primacy of developing countries whose people seek sustained development most. Anything less will be a recipe for failure.

Mr. President,

28. We cannot speak of development or of transformation when millions of the world's people are mired in and are broken by unrelenting poverty, disease and hunger.

29. The business of ridding the world of these plagues, touched upon but not fully embraced by the **Millennium Development Goals**, must be the first of the aspirations of the **Post-2015 Development Agenda**. Equally importantly it must be fully financed and accelerated, if we are to lay the ground work for a transformative agenda for the next generation.

30. I cannot emphasize this point enough. The scourge and shame of debilitating poverty, preventable diseases and chronic hunger must be erased from our global civilization. In the Sustainable Development Goals we have set ourselves a goal of **15 years** to do so, we must not fail.

Mr. President,

31. This year, here at the United Nations, Kenya is proud to have presided over the Conference of State parties of People living with Disabilities. Kenya also presided over the **United Nations Forest Forum**, and also co-chaired the **Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals**. Kenya is currently presiding over the UNICEF Board, as it seeks to provide global leadership for issues of concern to the world's children and their well-being.

Mr. President,

32. Kenya is a member in good standing of the international community and it intends to continue to shoulder its global and regional responsibilities. Kenya is especially proud of

the scores of Kenyans who work for the United Nations here in New York, but also further a field in peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace-building and in many United Nations organizations in various United Nations stations around the world, including Nairobi. I salute all those Kenyans, every single one of them for their dedication and commitment.

33. We in Kenya believe that no nation is too poor or too rich, too big or too small to play its rightful role in making this world a better place for all.

Mr. President,

34. At the national level, **Kenya** grounds her transformation agenda on a strategic vision, **Vision 2030**. Importantly in **2010**, we adopted a new democratic constitution, which expanded and guaranteed a wider range of rights for our people and defined new institutions for the advancement of those rights. Drawing on this, we have re-engineered our system of governance, making it more democratic, inclusive, devolved and responsive.

35. We have also significantly expanded participation in political and development decision-making.

36. In **four** short years, we have witnessed the fruits of these foundational changes. Aware of the imperative to carry along all our people in development, my Government launched targeted interventions for the most vulnerable in society. These include a number of financial initiatives and training programs for women and youth. We have also prioritized the advancement of children's rights and welfare through initiatives that reduce mortality and morbidity.

37. Chief among these are universal immunization coverage, promotion of breast-feeding for the first **six months** of a child's life; provision of fortified foods and insecticide-treated mosquito nets; as well as free maternal and childcare in government hospitals.

38. In this respect, I wish to commend the first Lady of Kenya, **Mrs. Margaret Kenyatta**, for successfully launching the **Beyond Zero Campaign** that is tapping into private sector financing, to bolster the management of **chronic preventable diseases**, including **HIV/AIDS**, and to improve **maternal and child health** throughout the country.

39. Kenya is today on track to achieve universal primary education. Based on this, we have expanded our vision to include universal secondary education. We seek to build a more inclusive society, and strive to leave no one behind. It is for this reason that my Government has implemented a social protection cash transfer programme to orphans and vulnerable children, persons with severe disabilities, and our elderly citizens. This programme targets **450,000** households throughout Kenya.

40. Impact evaluations indicate that the programme has reduced poverty, improved family health, and raised school enrollment.

Excellencies,

41. As you are aware, Kenya is a leading tourist destination. We are also endowed with a number of rare species, some endangered, which we hold in trust for humanity. My Government attaches great value to conservation.

42. We continue to raise awareness of the need to step up the fight against poaching and illicit wildlife trafficking. We have enacted laws to help fight the scourge, and continue to work with other countries and organisations to enhance the protection of our **fauna and flora**.

43. Similarly, Kenya remains at the heart of international efforts to mitigate and adapt to challenges relating to climate change. We continue to work towards achieving **ten percent** forest cover; we are well above global targets for renewable energy use; and fully support all measures agreed upon at the recent **United Nations Environmental Assembly in Nairobi**.

44. Recognizing that our prosperity is linked to that of our neighbours, Kenya is engaged in a range of programmes and activities to hasten East Africa's integration.

45. We have eased the movement of goods and services across our borders. More importantly, our people can now travel, work and settle throughout East Africa; we have also grown our trade volumes; and are looking to closer integration across a range of other sectors.

Mr. President,

46. These are a few highlights of my government's transformative agenda. We are committed to safeguard and expand these initiatives by creating an enabling and secure environment.

47. In light of this, my Government continues to invest heavily to combat extremists and terrorists. This global effort needs to be reinforced because, as we know, the intent of terrorists is to destroy **free, secure, democratic nations and people**. As long as international terrorism exploits our open, multicultural and multi-religious society and gravely harms our social fabric, our progress towards achieving goals of a transformative agenda will be slowed.

Mr. President,

48. **Kenya** believes in a better, happier and more prosperous future for all. It is my hope that this confluence of forces that have come together to continually make our development efforts unnecessarily difficult, will be persuaded, with urgency, to reassess their motives and hopefully re-engage within the global community and with our country and region in a more positive, constructive and humane manner; recognizing that, in the end, no one people, nor one country, not even any one continent, can inhabit this world peaceably alone in isolation to the rest of the globe.

49. We are in this world together, to succeed together, to win together and to build a better future for all everywhere, together!

I thank you.