



STATEMENT

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT

OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE

COMRADE ROBERT GABRIEL MUGABE,

TO THE 69TH SESSION OF

THE UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

NEW YORK,

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2014.

Your Excellency, Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the United Nations
General Assembly,

Your Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-Moon,
Secretary General of the United Nations,

Your Majesties,

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Comrades and Friends.

Your Excellency,

Allow me to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the 69th Session of the General Assembly. We are indeed proud of the honour that has been bestowed upon the African continent as a result of your election.

Mr President,

The theme you have chosen for this session, “Delivering on and Implementing a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda” is pertinent, appropriate and timely. It is relevant in

our efforts to achieve a seamless transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals, and to the broader post-2015 Development Agenda. We look forward to having a candid and holistic debate on the challenges we continue to face at the domestic and international levels in our efforts to eradicate poverty.

Mr President,

The Millennium Development Goals helped to focus and mobilize global development efforts in order to achieve progress in the social sectors. However, despite the significant achievements under the framework of the MDGs, the progress was uneven between goals, among regions, and within countries. Consequently, we cannot remain complacent when some sections of the global community are marginalized, or even left behind. We are, therefore, gratified that the proposed sustainable development goals have taken on board the unfinished business of the millennium development goals. Part of that unfinished business concerns the critical issue of poverty eradication which remains the greatest global challenge. This

issue should therefore be the top priority and overarching objective of the development agenda for the future.

Mr. President,

We share the view in SADC that the post MDG agenda must be informed by national development priorities, and that the new targets must better reflect local conditions. In this regard, Zimbabwe adopted its own economic blueprint, the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (Zim-Asset). This is a bold and achievable development programme that has the objective of achieving inclusive economic growth, generation of decent jobs for all, affordable and reliable energy, food security, sustainable agriculture and development of reliable modern infrastructure. Through this programme we also aim to expand the industrial base which is key to sustained overall economic development as well as the human development of our country. We continue to push for the leveraging of our diverse and abundant resources through the beneficiation and value addition of our resources. We therefore expect that the proposals in the sustainable development goals, which complement these elements of our national aspirations,

will be endorsed and integrated in the post-2015 Development Agenda framework.

Mr. President, Your Excellencies,

Social justice, political stability and sustainable development in African countries can best be achieved through genuine and committed support for the ownership of means of production that favour the poor, who are in the majority. In Zimbabwe, my Government has gone a long way in laying the foundation for sustained food production through our Land Reform Programme. The majority of the rural people have been empowered to contribute to household, and to national food security. The possession and exploitation of land has also turned them into masters of their own destiny, thus giving true meaning to our national independence and unquestioned sovereignty.

Mr. President,

Because Zimbabwe has thus been pre-occupied with the empowerment of its people economically, she has become a victim of the evil machinations of Western countries who continue to apply unilateral and illegal sanctions as a foreign

policy tool to achieve short-term political objectives, particularly regime change. Mr President, regime change is a diabolical illegal policy of interference in the domestic affairs of my country and no good can come from undermining our economy, or depriving our citizens of the necessities of life. Why, I ask, should Zimbabweans continue to suffer under the yoke of unjustified and unwarranted illegal sanctions. These evil sanctions violate the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and should be condemned by the international community. We once again call for their immediate and unconditional removal.

We are a peaceful and peace-loving nation, ready to engage in constructive dialogue for mutually beneficial relations. We call on those who continue to harbour ill will against us to cast away their hegemony-driven hostility as we appeal to them to review their hard positions and open a new chapter in their relations with us based on mutual respect and friendly cooperation.

Mr. President,

To support the implementation of the post-2015 Development Agenda, we call for expeditious reform of the Bretton Woods Institutions, particularly their governance structures. It is high time that we addressed the democratic deficit in these institutions and improve their legitimacy. These reforms must reflect current realities and ensure the full voice and participation of developing countries in their decision-making and norm-setting.

Mr. President,

Zimbabwe firmly believes that the United Nations should promote dialogue to achieve peace, rule of law and common understanding among states. Peace, security, stability and welfare of Africa and our sub-region is vital for us. In Africa, the African Union is working tirelessly to push for peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Central Africa Republic and Somalia. The international community must remain intensively engaged and support Africa in the maintenance of peace and stability, enhancing thereby its peacekeeping capacity needs through training, logistical and financial support. Africa also remains seized with the issue of

Western Sahara, the last colonial vestige in Africa. The United Nations should not shake off its responsibility to ensure the achievement of self-determination by the people of Western Sahara.

Mr. President,

We continue to witness the suffering and persecution of the people of Palestine at the hands of Israel. We have witnessed the callous murder of women and children in shelters where they seek refuge from Israel's bombs. We have witnessed the brutal and random destruction of infrastructure in the Gaza strip, and while these heinous acts were being perpetrated by Israel, the so-called civilized world maintained a deafening silence.

Lasting peace in the Middle East can only be achieved through a two state solution based on the 1967 borders. Any other manoeuvres to change demographic realities through settlements or use of force will only prolong the suffering of the Palestinians.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, as we move forward, it is important to muster the necessary political will to create a development-oriented international environment that hastens the eradication of poverty and enhances the correct management of our natural resources for economic and social development under renewed real global partnership.

I thank you.

RGM/jm