



# MADAGASCAR



**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**H.E. Mr. MARC RAVALOMANANA  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR**

**BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
THE 63<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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**AGENDA ITEM 57 a)**

**HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING ON  
"AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT NEEDS:  
STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF VARIOUS COMMITMENTS,  
CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD".**

**NEW YORK, 22 SEPTEMBER, 2008**

*vérifier au prononcé*

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Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you Secretary-General for your initiative to organize a specific panel on the development of Africa. I further would like to thank those involved in drawing up this very thorough report.

This report outlines many useful and practical ideas and strategies on how to improve development efforts in Africa. Today, I would like to concentrate on four issues in particular:

First, let us remember that the Millennium Development Goals are common goals shared by all nations of the world, both developing and developed countries. We must recognize that the ultimate responsibility for the development of our countries is ours. We need to take the lead on our own destiny and show the world that we, the leaders of Africa, are serious, committed and determined. In turn, we ask our partners in the developed countries to honor their pledges of increased aid to Africa.

In Madagascar, we developed the Madagascar Action Plan to realize our vision “Madagascar-Naturally!” and to reach the Millennium Development Goals. We have outlined the costs: In addition to the funds we have already raised - we will need an additional \$570 million for education, \$960 million for rural development, \$450 million for health and more. To date, we have raised \$4.2 billion and we need another \$4.9 billion. If the international community follows through on its promises of increased aid, we will reach these financial targets, thereby allowing us to move forward on achieving the MDGs in Madagascar.

I would like to ask the United Nations to get more involved in advocacy to promote doubled aid for Africa.

Second, during this year’s General Assembly, we will talk about various challenges, especially the food crisis, but also others, like climate change, increasing energy prices and fuel shortages, unpredictable financial markets, etc. We have to be very careful that these other global crises and important issues do not push the MDGs into the margins of our agenda.

We especially have to take care that resources that have been dedicated to achieving the MDGs are not directed towards other crises and challenges. The other crises and challenges require additional resources and better coordination of efforts.

We, as Africans, should also take care to strengthen existing partnerships and develop more creative partnerships with foundations, the private sector and the civil society to deal with those complex challenges and issues.

Third, we need an agricultural revolution across Africa, one that will significantly boost farm productivity and incomes for the poor while safeguarding the environment, one that will help millions of small-scale farmers lift themselves out of poverty and hunger.

In Madagascar we developed a vision called "Madagascar - *Naturally!*" and launched a "natural revolution" to strengthen rural areas, enhance agricultural productivity, give land titles to farmers, provide access to micro credit, process natural products, enhance the value chain and create economic growth from the bottom up.

The UN together with other donors should increase the provision of financial resources and technical expertise to all our countries to speed up and support this agricultural revolution.

Fourth and last, besides finances, the lack of capacity is the main hurdle in the way of our development. This stresses the importance of education. But I believe that we can do more to enhance our capacity apart from simply improving our general school and university systems:

a) We should further develop and strengthen programs to educate our people in the “Management of Development” so as to have a strong pool of development professionals with the skills and capacities to tackle our problems and to help build our future. Partnerships between universities in developed and developing countries, faculty and student exchange programs and joint research initiatives are some of the important areas to work on.

b) We should reinforce and enhance our efforts to reverse the brain drain and to stem the outward flow of skilled professionals from developing countries. We need efforts to bring our best minds, those who have studied abroad, back to their native countries.

We need these people and very often they would like to return but there are many factors that prevent them from doing so. We need to help motivate these women and men to dedicate their talents to the development of their home countries. For that, we welcome the support of the UN and other partners.

I thank you for your attention.