

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY
HIS EXCELLENCY
MR. HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBWA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
AT
THE 60TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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**Check Against Delivery*

Mr. President,
Your Majesties,
Your Excellencies,
Heads of State and Government,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I wish to congratulate you most warmly, Mr. President, on your unanimous election to the Presidency of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, and assure you of my delegation's full support. May I also express our profound appreciation to your distinguished predecessor, H.E. Mr. Jean Ping of Gabon, for the effective leadership he provided during the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly.

Mr. President,

I am most delighted and indeed honoured to address this August Assembly for the first time, as President of the Republic of Namibia. I stand before you with the democratic mandate given to me by the people of Namibia during our Presidential Elections in November 2004, and following my inauguration on 21st March 2005.

At the same occasion, we celebrated 15 years of our national independence, which, as you will recall, was brought about by a long and bitter struggle waged by the Namibian people under the leadership of the national liberation movement, SWAPO, with wide international support, and thus culminating in the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978.

I recall these important events in our history to underline the fact that Namibia's nationhood is directly linked to the United Nations. In this regard, allow me, therefore, on behalf of the Government and people of Namibia and indeed on my own behalf to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the men and women of the United Nations family, who stood side by side with us until final victory was achieved.

Mr. President,

As we mark the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations, it is indeed proper and fitting to reflect on the achievements and setbacks of our Organization since its inception. In this exercise, we must be guided by an honest and objective analysis of events along the path we have traveled so far.

In this connection, I would like to take this opportunity to commend our Secretary General His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, most sincerely, for his tireless efforts aimed at strengthening the United Nations system, through the proposed reforms.

Indeed, the challenges we face today require renewed commitment and visionary leadership to ensure efficient and effective service delivery to all humanity.

When we address the crucial issues concerning the reform of the United Nations System, we must be guided by the very principles of democracy, equity, justice and fairness for all. At the center of this overdue exercise must be the compelling need to better serve all our peoples regardless of their race, religion or status of development.

With specific reference to the United Nations Security Council, genuine democratization and reform can only take place when all its Members are accorded the same privileges, including the veto power, which is currently enjoyed only by a few member States, who use it for national self-interest. This creates resentment and mistrust from those who are negatively affected by the abuse of veto power.

It is against this background, that African States adopted the Harare Declaration of 1997, in which they demanded that the veto power should be abolished. However, if the veto power is maintained, it is only logical that new permanent member States who join the expanded Security Council, of necessity, must be accorded the same rights and privileges. Otherwise, such reform will be cosmetic at best, and meaningless at worst.

On this very crucial matter, Namibia fully stands by the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, as reaffirmed by the 4th Extra-Ordinary Summit of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa on 4th August 2005. We collectively, maintain that the African continent, that has been unrepresented for so long, deserves two permanent seats with a veto power, and five non-permanent seats. This demand is logical, reasonable and justifiable. We, therefore, call on all other regions to support Africa's position. It is, indeed, only when we stand together on firm principles that we can effect real and meaningful change in our only truly international organization, the United Nations.

Concerning the General Assembly, Namibia holds a strong view that this Organ, which provides a genuine democratic and representative platform for all Member States to be heard, should play a critical role in the entire reform process of our International Organization. We are equally of strong conviction that the authority of the General Assembly should be reasserted, so that its resolutions and decisions are binding and enforceable.

In this crucial process, our highest priority should be our collective commitment to ensure sustainable social and economic development on a global scale. In order to achieve this goal, we must be guided by a strong spirit of human solidarity, and a shared sense of justice and fairness for all.

For many developing countries, the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals is severely hampered by the lack of adequate resources, compounded by other challenges including the HIV/Aids pandemic, malaria and tuberculosis, as well as other socio-economic difficulties. Against this background, ECOSOC must be strengthened and given sufficient resources, together with the United Nations Agencies, in order to take the lead in implementing effective human centered country programmes.

We accept that governments in developing countries have the responsibility to work together and encourage the active participation of the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders in bringing about sustainable social and economic development for all sections of our society.

It is equally important that governments and institutions in the economically advanced countries offer genuine partnership, by providing new and additional resources commensurate with their commitments in line with the Millennium Development Goals. To that end, if the countries regarded as low-middle-income countries are to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, they will require increased support from the international community, including market access as well as access to financial sources such as International Development Association and Official Development Assistance.

Mr. President,

Our ability to effectively eliminate threats to international peace and security will depend on the manner in which we address the social and economic challenges facing our peoples globally.

As we reviewed the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other decisions taken by major International Conferences during the 2005 Summit, it became clear that we still have a long way to go to honour our commitments. It is, therefore, important that we narrow our differences and forge a common front with a common objective to better serve humanity. We should, therefore, make collective and effective use of existing multilateral mechanisms, especially the United Nations in order to succeed in eliminating current and future threats.

Mr. President,

The process of decolonization has not yet been completed. The peoples of Palestine and Western Sahara continue to suffer under foreign occupation and are denied the exercise of their inalienable rights to self-determination and national independence. It is our collective responsibility to rectify this historic injustice. In this regard, we call for the immediate and unconditional establishment of an independent State of Palestine and the full implementation of the United Nations Settlement Plan for Western Sahara.

I am equally concerned that the people of Cuba continue to suffer from the effects of a unilateral embargo imposed on them by the United States of America. We call on the international community to demand the unconditional lifting of this embargo.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate my Government's hope that, when we accept our collective responsibility, the United Nations can and will indeed succeed in preserving

international peace and security, and therefore, guarantee equality and justice for all humanity. We, the people of the United Nations, must do what is required to bequeath to the next generations a better future. To this end, the Government and people of Namibia pledge our total commitment.

I thank you.