



UGANDA

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STATEMENT BY

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AT THE

**61ST SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Madam President,
Secretary-General,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first of all congratulate you on your election to the office of the President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly. I am confident that with your wealth of experience you will guide our deliberations effectively. I wish also to thank your predecessor, H.E. Madam Jan Eliasson of Sweden for the manner in which he presided over the High-level segment of the 60th Session and the General Assembly. Under his leadership, the Assembly managed to achieve historic milestones including the creation of the UN Human Rights Council and the Peace Building Commission. Let me also pay tribute to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his leadership of our organization.

Madam President,

As a firm supporter of multilateralism, Uganda believes that the Assembly is the most appropriate forum for addressing issues of global concern. A great number of important decisions have been taken by this Assembly; landmark agreements reached and important commitments undertaken by members of this Assembly.

Madam President,

In spite of all these efforts, the threat to global peace and security and to human dignity has never been more serious than it is today. This situation obtains today because we are yet to start addressing the real root-causes of the problems facing us. My delegation believes that it will remain an uphill task for us to guarantee global peace as long as the majority in developing countries and elsewhere in the world continue to suffer the indignity of poverty and deprivation while we continue with business as usual. We only need to ask ourselves why a large number of international problems that are high on the UN agenda are occurring in the developing part of the world. Those are real issues that affect the daily lives of the people and they require urgent solutions which have been slow in coming.

The onus is on this Assembly to ensure that what we agree upon or committed ourselves to doing is done at the time it has to be done. The Millennium Declaration that we adopted here 6 years ago remains an important milestone because it introduced a paradigm shift from emphasis on statement of commitments to actual action. However, there have been some obstacles to the achievement of the goals set.

In areas where progress has been made, due credit must be given. In this regard, Uganda welcomes the establishment of the Human Rights Council to work alongside the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

We are also pleased that action was promptly taken to create the Peacebuilding Commission as an important intergovernmental mechanism to assist countries in

transition from war to durable peace. We welcome these as important contributions to the reform agenda of the UN.

Madam President,

While commendable progress has been achieved in other areas of reform, great frustration remains with the reform and expansion of the Security Council. In my delegation's view, the expansion of the Security Council is the most important facet of the UN reform with regard to the maintenance of global peace and security.

It is now a truism that the Security Council does not reflect today's geopolitical realities, but only the balance of power of the 1940's. Africa is the only continent with no permanent member on the Security Council despite its size and immense influence. That is why Africa is demanding at least two permanent seats on the Council. We acknowledge that the existence of a veto is an acronym but as long as it exists we do not want to join as second class member with no veto.

Madam President,

Lack of agreement on how to move forward the development agenda is one of our major concern. It is unacceptable for the big section of the global community to continue living on less than a dollar a day while we have the capacity and the means to pull them out of that abject poverty. We must address this problem as a matter of urgency. One way of doing so is to live by our commitments as reflected, for example, in the Monterrey Consensus, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Brussels Plan of Action etc. We must put in place measurable benchmarks to realize these goals. It is disappointing to see that very little progress has been made to date on official development assistance; on foreign direct investments; on debts and on market access. The failed conclusion of the WTO development agenda is a case in point. The Doha development round was launched as a process that would eventually give developing countries a fair chance to compete in the world market place. It was expected to restore the momentum of open market while giving genuine priority to the concerns and interests of developing countries. Five years down the road we have not agreed on opening up the markets and eliminating discriminative subsidies.

My delegation strongly feels that part of this failure is attributed to the multilateral system's lack of good global governance, poor coordination and lack of coherence in the system. As the UN has a responsibility to identify the causes hindering the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs, the UN is the right body to track implementation of commitments undertaken by development partners. An effective mechanism should be devised for doing this.

Uganda calls on the international community and the UN in particular to explore new and more effective ways of promoting consensus on issues of vital importance to the peace, security and the prosperity of our global community. In this regard we would like to welcome and encourage the holding of the High-Level events that have been organized

alongside this session. The High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development that was held last week has produced important outcomes that are going to be valuable in the formulation of policies on international migration and development. In the same light the Convening of the High-Level Meeting on the mid-term Comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries is a welcome decision as it will feed into the mid-term review.

With regard to Africa's development, NEPAD is the key framework for action. We continue to urge development partners to support Africa's effort by contributing positively and effectively to the implementation of this regional development strategy. To the UN system in particular we request that the funding that comes from the UN Development System should focus on Africa's priorities as determined by the partner states while care should be taken to avoid diversion of development resources to other donor driven activities.

Madam President,

I would now like to turn my attention to the situation in our own region. Uganda is part-and-parcel of the Great Lakes region, therefore, our security and development cannot be guaranteed in isolation. For this reason Uganda is fully committed to the realization of peace and security and has continued to play a key role in the search for durable peace and security in the region through dialogue as the most preferred means. Uganda welcomes the positive developments in Southern Sudan with the establishment of the Government there. Uganda also welcomes the democratic process that is being pursued in the DRC. We would like to call upon all parties involved to have full confidence in the process for its successful completion.

The regional initiative on Burundi under Uganda's chairmanship is making steady progress and we have full confidence in its success. Uganda also wishes to appeal to the international community, especially our development partners to support the general peace initiative in the region by contributing generously to the success of the International Conference on Great Lakes Region initiated by the UN in collaboration with the African Union.

With regard to Somalia, we call for international support of the Interim Government. In this regard we call on the Security Council to the lift arms embargo to enable deployment of IGASOM and AU Forces.

Madam President,

At the national level, the major threat to peace and security in Uganda has been the terrorist group of the Lord Resistance Army (LRA). As a terrorist group with no political agenda the LRA, for a number of years, has unleashed terror on the population of Northern and North East Uganda, killing and maiming people and abducting children for training into killers and also using them as sex slaves. However, the LRA has now been defeated and the remnants have relocated to Garamba Park in the DRC.

Government, with mediation of Southern Sudan Government, is engaged in Peace Talks with LRA.

It was after a careful analysis of the situation that Uganda decided to take such a painful decision to offer amnesty. Painful in the sense that we do not condone impunity. We are, however, convinced that the alternative traditional justice system that we intend to apply is an equitable solution. We call on the international community to assist the process we have embarked on. We are determined to resolve the conflict peacefully. Peace is what our people want and it is peace that we determined to give them.

I thank you for your attention.