

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**



**PAPUA NEW GUINEA STATEMENT**

**TO THE**

**62<sup>nd</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**BY**

**GRAND CHIEF RT. HON. SIR MICHAEL T. SOMARE, GCL, GCMG, CH, CF, KStJ**

**Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea**

**New York  
27<sup>th</sup> of September 2007**

Mr. President

I wish to convey Papua New Guinea's congratulations on your election as the President of the 62<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly and assure you of my country's full cooperation during your Presidency.

We compliment your predecessor, Her Excellency Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, for her stewardship of our work during her tenure and wish her well in her future endeavors.

I would like to express our support to the Secretary-General His Excellency Mr Ban Ki-Moon for his leadership of our United Nations. Let me particularly thank him for his courage and strong leadership on the issue of global climate change.

By the same token, I also like to thank the staff of the Secretariat and all UN agencies who continue to give valuable service to Papua New Guinea.

Mr. President

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2007, two days after celebrating 32 years of Independence, Papua New Guinea convened its 8<sup>th</sup> National Parliament. This was a result of another successful general election.

Democracy is a challenge, but Papua New Guinea continues to thrive under it.

Our country, of more than 800 tribes and languages, continues to find in the democratic principles the binding force and unity in diversity in the 32 years of unbroken democracy.

Papua New Guinea remains committed to the principles and purposes of the United Nations. We agree with you Mr President that we must:

*... continue to work with common purpose to renew, modernize and strengthen this organization so it can rise to the challenges of the 21st century.*

The increasing incidences of human atrocities, genocides and wars, poverty, terrorism, HIV/AIDS and increase in malaria and TB, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, drug and human smuggling, environmental degradation and climate change are issues which, we believe, the UN is best placed to address.

Again we agree with you that:

*"global challenges demand multilateral solutions. The United Nations is the appropriate multilateral forum to take action. This is why the revitalization of this General Assembly deserves our highest attention. To revitalize this House is also to renew our faith in each other, our common values and destiny".*

We strongly endorse your five (5) priority issues of:

*"climate change; financing for development ... achieving the Millennium Development Goals; countering terrorism; and the UN reform agenda."*

To complement efforts in other fora, Papua New Guinea with other countries of the Pacific Region had agreed to pool our limited resources under the Pacific Plan to address many of these same issues; in particular sustainable development, climatic change and regional integration as the basis of our cooperation.

Mr. President

Let me now turn to an issue which my country feels strongly about – that of Climate Change.

To be clear, we are very concerned to see certain industrialized nations attempting to avoid responsibility for their own carbon emissions and shifting the focus to developing nations.

Only after industrialized nations take responsibility for the consequences of their own actions, will the pathway become clear for lasting solutions.

However, as Developing Countries, we are willing to contribute equitably towards a sustainable future.

During my earlier statements at the climate change high-level event, I put forward key principles needed to guide future international agreements on climate change post-2012.

The time for leadership is NOW! If we are to defeat this self-inflicted calamity, we must succeed in 6 key areas:

1. We must Construct a Shared Vision for lower global greenhouse gas concentrations;
2. We must Aggressively Deepen Reduction Commitments by Industrialized Countries;
3. We must Create more Mechanisms to provide Positive Incentives for Developing Countries;
4. We must Launch a Global Framework to Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation;
5. We must Scale up Adaptation Finance for Future Generations and;
6. We must Mobilize Sufficient and Sustainable Resources to support positive incentives and adaptation.

The science is clear. Our planet is in distress! As co-inhabitants of this world, we all must address the root causes of this problem.

To succeed, leadership is required on both sides of the economic divide. Together, and only together, can we grasp the challenge before us and construct a sustainable future!

Mr. President

Papua New Guinea supports the on-going reforms at the United Nations Secretariat in order to strengthen it to better address some of the key challenges facing its membership. The reform should therefore reflect the geo-political, economic and social realities of today particularly one that takes into account the different levels of development facing its membership, one that is fair and equitable.

Mr. President

Global trade today is uneven and characterized more by its unfair trade practices, by those already holding decided advantages, than by the opportunities it offers to developing countries like Papua New Guinea.

Our efforts to develop a more equitable trading order are hampered by the reluctance of our developed partners to open their economies and engage in genuine development discussions.

The Doha Round negotiations are at a critical juncture. We need to collectively ensure that the negotiations are revived so that different trade needs of its members are addressed.

Mr. President

Papua New Guinea has moved ahead from an **“export driven economic growth strategy”** to **“economic consolidation and empowerment”**. At the heart of this policy objective is providing every Papua New Guinean equal opportunity to build homes, community and country.

To achieve this, stronger emphasis will be placed on agriculture, which has always been the mainstay of our rural populace. Along with this aim, relevant infrastructure will be built to support this important sector.

The country's five-year Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) is being reviewed to strengthen its alignment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Achieving the MDGs by 2015 is a challenge that requires our collective input in its implementation.

Mr. President

We call on development partners, including the UN, to play a supportive role to sustain these gains.

This can be done through fair trade opportunities, equitable markets, increased foreign investment, transfer of technology, capacity-building and providing quality overseas development assistance.

Mr. President

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is a serious threat on our social and economic security in many of our countries. Greater efforts must be made to arrest it.

In Papua New Guinea, my Government has passed HIV/AIDS Legislation underpinned by a comprehensive HIV/AIDS policy framework. We consider HIV/AIDS to be a developmental issue and deal with it separately from other Health issues.

But our experience suggests that national action alone is not enough. It requires a concerted global response. This is a threat that must be addressed on all fronts and by all countries.

We thank the UN and its related agencies for their efforts in addressing this HIV/AIDS. We also thank former US President, Mr. Bill Clinton for his contribution to this work in our Country. Likewise, we thank Mr. Bill Gates for the assistance given to research work on malaria in Papua New Guinea.

Mr. President

Of equal importance are the battles against malaria, TB, and other preventable diseases. While we have, as a global community, focused on HIV/Aids and bird flu, little attention is given to malaria, which remains the biggest killer disease in Papua New Guinea.

We call upon development partners to support Papua New Guinea and other countries in mitigating these challenges.

Mr. President

The conflict in the Middle East, despite various UN Resolutions, remains unresolved. Papua New Guinea appeals to all parties to the conflict, including those powers that have the capacity to influence a positive outcome, to make the necessary concessions for a peaceful resolution to this long standing issue.

We appeal to all parties to make full use of the dispute settlement procedures of the UN.

Mr. President

The Work of the UN Committee on Decolonization remains unfinished. We still have 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories, some in the Pacific, that are yet to exercise their rights to self-determination.

The forthcoming referendum in Tokelau demonstrates once again the true spirit of cooperation between Tokelau and New Zealand. We congratulate both Governments and assure the people of Tokelau of our respect for their ultimate decision.

In the same vein we hope that other administering powers will follow the example of New Zealand and assist the other territories reach a decision of their choice.

Mr. President

While our World today provides untold opportunities, we are at the same time faced with many complex challenges. We must renew our commitment and faith in the UN and seek to reform it in ways that are reflective of the realities of today.

When I brought my nation to take its seat thirty-two years ago in this Assembly, I said then and wish to reaffirm today that "...within the limits of our resources, Papua New Guinea will play an active and positive role in the United Nations..."

This commitment remains.

Thank you, Mr. President.