



Statement

by

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Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating your Excellency on your presidency, and wish you every success in the months ahead. I pledge my country's fullest co-operation in the discharge of your duties and responsibilities.

I must also extend my sincere appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon for his effective leadership in promoting global peace, security and development.

Mr. President,

Last year, this august Assembly declared and honored the opening of Ethiopia's third Millennium. We appreciate that honor.

It provided a tangible foundation for the Renaissance of Ethiopia, most recently symbolized by the re-erection of the obelisk of Aksum, brought back from Italy to the land of its origin, where it was carved seventeen centuries ago. We are grateful to the Italian Government for this, right and bold decision.

A central element of our Millennium celebrations has been the initiation of numerous developmental activities for the war on poverty and our commitment to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

As the Secretary-General has noted, progress towards the MDGs in Africa has been uneven. It is alarming that no country is likely to reach all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

We are, at the moment, at the mid-way mark and we all recognize that we are behind schedule. We hope that the High Level Event on the MDGs has achieved its objective in creating global awareness and renewed commitment with particular focus on Africa.

I concur with the Secretary-General that we are facing a "development emergency". In this regard, decisive and timely actions must be taken by both developed and developing countries to live up to their commitments to the Millennium Development Goals

Mr. President, food insecurity could undermine core democratic values and ruin national development endeavors. Governments should, therefore, take the lead and work together in the economic sector to resolve the current global food crisis.

The Monterrey Consensus on financing for development, integrating aid, debt relief, market access, good governance and foreign direct investment is a litmus test for the success of global partnerships. We call on developed countries to honor their commitment to devote zero point seven per cent (0.7 %) of their GDP to Overseas Development Assistance.

Mr. President,

The Millennium Development Goals provide the critical minimum for our survival as a nation, and the basis for the profound transformation on which we are currently engaged.

Ethiopia's priorities remain the eradication of poverty, sustainable development, and the ensuring of good-governance, democracy, and respect for human rights.

We have laid the foundations for continued growth and democratization, building democratic institutions from the grassroots, and providing the necessary political space for responsible democratization.

Our average of ten percent growth over the last five years is continuing despite the setbacks in recent months. We continue protecting poverty targeted outlays, and increasing capital expenditure on infrastructure, education, health, and pro-poor sectors. For the first time in its history, Ethiopia is making real and meaningful economic progress. It is the fastest growing non-oil economy in Africa.

Ethiopia is both land-locked and one of the least developed countries. Accordingly, we attach great importance to the full implementation of both the Brussels and the Almaty Programmes of Action.

While we appreciate all external assistance, we are equally conscious of the need for predictable, strong and enduring partnerships for mutual benefit. We need economic relations that no longer penalize poor countries; that provide greater flexibility in development aid, in the transfer of capital and in the removal of excessive indebtedness.

The objectives of the Millennium Development Goals make it necessary that global affluence and welfare are inseparable, and prosperity cannot co-exist with abject poverty.

In light of the present world trading system, we urge realistic preferential terms of trade especially to least developed countries, including quota and duty free market access for all their goods and services.

Mr. President,

Ethiopia has consistently helped promote peace and stability in our region. We have no doubt that sustainable development will only be possible with durable peace and security.

These form the very foundation of our sub-regional organization, the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development, IGAD. As the current chair of IGAD, Ethiopia is determined to ensure that IGAD's revitalization will become a reality and enhance regional integration, and promote peace, security and development.

We know the dangers of continued conflict in our region. This is indeed why we have committed ourselves to peace in Somalia ever since we helped organize the first broad-based peace conference in 1992. We have consistently supported all efforts to bring about an effective government in that country.

In this regard, we are encouraged by the latest positive political developments in Somalia. The Djibouti Agreement and the Addis Ababa 'road map' open the way for further progress in the peace process. We now look forward to the planned IGAD summit in Nairobi, early next month, to help Somalia's leaders do more for national reconciliation.

At the same time, we urge the United Nations Security Council to discharge its responsibility by deploying a peacekeeping mission in Somalia as soon as possible or, at least, to allocate the necessary resources to strengthen AMISOM. We commend the deployment of troops from Uganda and Burundi to AMISOM. It is never too late for others to follow their example.

Ethiopia appreciates the progress made in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in the Sudan. We urge the parties to do more in overcoming the challenges facing them. However, we must emphasize that the international community should also bear its shared responsibility in this regard.

Ethiopia fully supports the African Union position on Darfur and the handling of the ICC-Sudan issue.

Ethiopia stands firmly committed to resolve all outstanding issues with Eritrea through peaceful, political, legal and diplomatic means.

Mr. President,

Terrorism is a scourge that impedes peace and development in any part of the world. As its occurrence in any form threatens global security at large, Ethiopia believes that it should be addressed collectively.

In this regard, we attach great significance to the value of dialogue among civilizations to build a culture to enable us to create closer understanding among nations, all nations.

Ethiopia remains committed, Mr. President, to the UN reform process and its revitalization. This is critical for the credibility of the UN and for the future of multilateralism. As a founding member of the UN, Ethiopia will always remain loyal to its purposes and principles.

The UN is the custodian of multilateral diplomacy. At no time since the Second World War has multilateralism and genuine co-operation been as critical as it is today. This is why we continue to need the UN as never before. It is a body that remains vital for the future of us all, developing and developed countries, alike.

I thank you.