

REPUBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA



DE SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE

Speech by H. E. Prime Minister

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United Nations

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Your Excellencies,

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Honorable Heads of State and Government,

Honorable Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great honor and pleasure that I take the floor, for the first time, in this great World Forum, as Prime Minister and Head of Government proudly representing the Democratic Republic of São Tomé & Príncipe.

Please allow me first to address Mr. Sam Kutesa to congratulate him on his election as President of this 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly and to offer him our full support during his term, which we wish to be full of successes.

Indeed, his election is a result of the recognition among the Member States of our Organization of the experience that his country, the Republic of Uganda, has accumulated, in particular, and of the increasingly significant role that the African Continent has played as part of the international community in the consolidation of peace and security around the world. It also reflects his efforts toward the sustainable development of developing countries, in addition to his prominent and rich professional qualifications, which are evidenced in his technical knowledge and life experience.

We are certain that his experience as a diplomat will greatly contribute to the success of this Session's work and allow it to find better paths to the

resolution of the important matters of concern to the international community.

We again congratulate you, Mr. President, for the quality of your profile vis-à-vis the theme of this session, which is important and current. The Post-2015 Development Agenda, once it is properly defined and structured, will certainly become a useful instrument to guide developing countries, particularly those of the African Continent, to sustainable development.

We also wish to express our appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his competent, selfless, and zealous stewardship of our Organization.

And we equally congratulate His Excellency Mr. John William Ashe, who has zealously and selflessly presided over our Organization for the past twelve months.

Mr. President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The pertinence of the theme chosen for this 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly is clear in light of the persisting economic and financial crisis that continues to ravage the world. We must combine and focus our efforts on building the more just and auspicious future to which our peoples legitimately aspire.

To this end, Africa has identified six pillars on which to anchor its sustainable development, namely: i) Structural Economic Transformation and Inclusive Growth; ii) Science, Technology, and Innovation; iii) People-centered Development; iv) Environmental Sustainability, Natural

Resources Management and Disaster Management; v) Peace and Security; vi) Finance and Partnerships.

From our perspective, these pillars emanate from the aspirations of our African nations and all partners of the African Continent must be take them into account in their arduous efforts toward sustainable and equitable development and the affirmation of the dignity of our peoples.

Therefore, São Tomé & Príncipe believes in sustainable development in Africa based on the pillars proposed by the African Union and calls on the United Nations to adapt its Program to the specific realities of Africa without losing sight of the accomplishments of certain countries in attaining some of the eight Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

It is an indisputable fact that the reason for the existence of the United Nations is to maintain peace and security around the world, which is a sine qua non condition for the promotion of development.

However, in light of the significant changes that the world has undergone since the establishment of our Organization in 1945, we must stress the urgent need to adapt it to the new challenges of our time.

Therefore, we again reiterate our call for the acceleration of the ongoing process of reform in the entire United Nations System, in order to imbue it with greater dynamism, representation, effectiveness, capacity, and legitimacy in operations leading to the maintenance of peace and security and, thus, to the promotion of development worldwide.

Mr. President

Honorable Delegates

We unfortunately continue to observe the persistence of some conflict areas and the outbreak of new tensions with alarmingly significant humanitarian repercussions spread throughout the world.

In Mali and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, despite a relative stabilization of conflict zones as a result of United Nations efforts, we think that combined operations must continue in order to consolidate and strengthen the achievements.

We are grateful for the resolution of the situation in Guinea-Bissau, where the transition process led to the election of a new President of the Republic and a new Government, thus repositioning the country through regular and institutional democratic avenues.

However, it is incumbent on the international community, particularly the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), to continue to collaborate and combine their efforts to consolidate the Democratic Rule of Law so that our sister nation may advance toward progress and well-being for its people.

It is with enormous satisfaction and brotherhood that we congratulate the political actors in Mozambique for their great maturity and for taking into account the highest interests of their people as they recently signed a Peace Agreement, thus avoiding more suffering and losses of human lives.

With regard to the Central African Republic, we welcome the UN's decision to send a multidimensional peacekeeping force (MINUSCA) to

end the suffering of their people and to clear the way for national reconciliation. This process began with the recent Brazzaville Forum and should be completed with the Bangui Forum and the holding of elections, which may open windows of opportunity for the resolution of this disturbing crisis and for this country in our sub-region to return to institutional normalcy.

With respect to South Sudan, we encourage efforts to convince the conflicting parties to engage in negotiations to seek a solution for their existing differences and to end the suffering of innocent civilians.

The everlasting situation of Western Sahara continues to be a matter of concern for us and to require a greater involvement from all of us in seeking a definitive completion for this long negotiation process. Therefore we renew our call for the involved parties to return to the negotiating table in order to reach a mutually acceptable political solution.

In light of the resurgence of acts of international terrorism in every area of the world, it is imperative for the entire international community to coordinate their actions as the only way for the world to be able to fight this scourge.

To this end, we wish to note our apprehension and express our concern with regard to the actions perpetrated by Boko Haram in our neighboring Republic of Nigeria, a country with which São Tomé & Príncipe maintains ties of friendship and multiple relations of understanding and cooperation in areas of common interest, and the consequences of such actions.

We are further concerned with the recent phenomenon of the Islamic State and its implications.

The Middle East unfortunately continues on the path of bloody conflicts that have taken an enormous number of human lives, with the everlasting

hostilities between Israel and Palestine, which very recently presented devastating scenes to the world.

Therefore, we welcome the recent cease-fire between the two parties and renew our call for a negotiated solution that will ensure the Palestinian people's right to control their own destiny, as well the State of Israel's right to exist, in accordance with the appropriate United Nations resolutions.

Similarly, there is no military solution for the persistent internal conflict in Syria, which has created disastrous humanitarian consequences. Therefore we welcome the recent cease-fire between the parties and renew our call for a compromise to be reached, with the help and support of the international community, in order to end the hostilities and clear the way for a frank dialogue across the negotiating table and a political solution for lasting peace.

On the other hand, with respect to the conflict in Ukraine, which is also causing the loss of many human lives, the Democratic Republic of São Tomé & Príncipe regrets the situation and calls on the parties to move forward rapidly, through dialogue, in resolving their differences. The international community must make all efforts to facilitate such dialogue.

Mr. President

Honorable Delegates

We believe that you agree with us when we say that our global security is vital for the sustainable development of our countries.

Therefore, considering that São Tomé & Príncipe is centrally located in the Gulf of Guinea, a region that is strongly affected by piracy, terrorism, drug trafficking, and other illicit acts committed at sea, we have taken national

steps to fight these phenomena, such as the drafting of a legislative framework for the modernization of the Armed Forces, based on a strategy that focuses decisively on the sea and its resources.

At the sub-regional level, we have worked as part of the ECOWAS/ECCAS/GGC partnership to implement the recommendations of the Yaoundé Summit.

To this end, we welcome the progress achieved in the process of establishing the Inter-regional Coordination Center (CIC), which is scheduled to begin operations very soon, and renew our call for the international community to continue with us on this arduous path toward ensuring our collective security.

We strongly believe that taking steps to face the harmful effects of climate change is a responsibility that must be shared by developing countries and developed countries in order to ensure the continuity of the Clean Development Mechanism, particularly for the Least Developed Countries, as well as to mobilize the political will for a legally binding global agreement through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be adopted at the COP 21, which is expected to take place in Paris in 2015.

Your Excellencies,

The trade embargo imposed against Cuba decades ago constitutes another matter of great concern for us. For this reason, São Tomé & Príncipe renews its call for these sanctions to be lifted in order to allow Cuba to address their economic and social development challenges in an environment of normalcy, without the restrictions imposed by such



sanctions, and to take better advantage of opportunities for trade relations on an equal footing with other Member States of our Organization.

Mr. President,

Honorable Delegates,

The African Continent is once again assailed by an epidemic of hemorrhagic fever caused by the Ebola virus, with incalculable consequences.

In light of the high level of mortality and the devastating effects of the disease, on the one hand, and the chance that it may spread to other areas of the world, on the other hand, we must urgently identify synergies to engage in an all-out struggle to save the thousands of lives that are threatened by this terrible scourge.

In São Tomé & Príncipe, we fortunately have not yet seen any Ebola cases. However, in light of our country's vulnerability, our economic and financial weaknesses, and our health institutions' lack of experience in dealing with this outbreak, we have prepared a Contingency Plan and taken prevention and response measures, including entry and exit restrictions at our ports and airports, which may impact our fragile economy. You will understand that we must count on the World Health Organization's help and on the support and experience of friendly nations in order to protect our populations against any sources or forms of contamination.

In this regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's initiative in convening a high-level meeting on the margins of this Session in order to discuss the matter and take appropriate measures.

Before I finish our statement, please allow us to note the situation of calm and progress between the two sides on the Taiwan Strait. We welcome this environment and encourage the parties to develop their relations through negotiations.

Our country is pleased to see the participation of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in the General Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) and applauds the fact that Taiwan has been invited for the first time since 1971 to participate in the Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization last year.

Therefore, and considering the enormous potential of Taiwan, we would like to see their participation further extended to other specialized agencies of the United Nations, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and in the implementation process of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which could constitute a significant contribution to the international community.

In conclusion, we reiterate our country's willingness to continue to participate in the efforts toward mobilizing wills and synergies for the achievement of the basic principles and noble objectives that guided the establishment of the United Nations.

Excellencies,

It is certain that today we are a democratic country with a community of free citizens. But challenges will continue to appear in the future. Therefore, we have made efforts toward consolidating democracy, so that our citizens may have an increasingly aware and active involvement in our collective existence, and the political debate may be broader and more responsible in order to achieve compromises among

all political forces, which may serve as the basis for the reforms that our country needs.

We are fully aware that our country's economic performance hinges on political stability and our citizens' trust in our democratic institutions.

I could not end without sharing with you that São Tomé & Príncipe will hold long-awaited legislative, regional, and local elections on October 12. The electoral process is being managed in an environment of great normalcy, and we have resolved the financial difficulties related to these elections with the generous support of our development partners, to which we express our profound gratitude and esteem.

We expect the election results to be transparent and fair, as our tradition dictates, and that our country will continue to be a great benchmark of democracy in our sub-region.

Thank you very much for your attention.