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STATEMENT

BY

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PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

**DURING THE 60TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

SATURDAY, 17TH SEPTEMBER 2005

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Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to address the General Assembly on the occasion of my first visit to the United Nations as Head of State. May I first of all congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over the 60th Session of the General Assembly.

I would also like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan for his able stewardship of our organization, and for initiating reform proposals for us to consider. Since his appointment, Mr. Annan has steered the United Nations with tact and patience. His skill as a builder of consensus has indeed been exemplary. We share his vision for the United Nations in the Twenty-First Century as outlined in his epic report, "In Larger Freedom". I am confident that Member States will seize this historic opportunity and deliver on the promise of a better world for posterity.

Mr. President,

The shift in the global distribution of power, accompanied by the emergence of new threats and challenges, has dramatically changed the context within which the United Nations operates. The United Nations of the future must still, however, remain true to the universal values, which inspired its creation. Our people expect the United Nations to act as an agent of progress. They look upon the organization to play an effective and leading role in improving their economic and social well-being.

Kenya embraces the principles of the Charter, which serves as a basic reference point for the reform of the United Nations. These principles are the core of its inner strength. We believe that the principle of democracy is as central to this organization and its future health, as it is to our own nations. Kenya deeply cherishes this value and seeks its generous spread around the world and in this institution.

Mr. President,

Global problems require global solutions. The United Nations is the only vehicle that can help us attain these solutions and provide legitimacy to our actions. The United Nations remains indispensable in the maintenance of international peace and security. It is pivotal to the attainment of sustainable development, and the advancement of human rights. Let us work to strengthen the United Nations to meet contemporary challenges.

Important proposals for United Nations reform are already on the table. My government embraces the holistic definition of collective security, which strongly affirms the connection between peace, development, human rights, and the rule of law. These goals cannot be realized in isolation. As the Secretary-General observed, "We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights". I am sure we all acknowledge these plain truths.

Kenya firmly believes that reform of the United Nations is a process, not an event. In view of the integrated nature of the issues, we need to adopt a comprehensive policy approach to UN reforms. We must maintain a broad vision driven by collective effort for the ultimate benefit of the international system.

I am happy to note that some of the proposals laid out have been adopted. We should now move quickly and implement them. I refer, especially to the proposals that do not require amendment of the UN Charter. These include the adoption of a robust counter-terrorism strategy; strengthening peacekeeping; creating a Peace Building Commission and Fund and the reform of the Human Rights system.

I am also pleased to note the consensus on the strengthening of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and a strong relationship between the UN and Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations.

Mr. President,

Environmental protection is a threat that is a major challenge in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. This places the environment, more than ever, at the core of sustainable development. International Environmental Governance is an integral part of realizing sustainable development. Kenya fully endorses the ongoing process of defining the elements of International Environmental Governance. This, however, should be done within the framework of the Cartagena decision, which aims at strengthening UNEP within its current mandate through enhanced financial and scientific base.

We should also recognize that no truly effective response can be made unless the international community fully complies with their commitment to make the means available as provided for in various multilateral environmental agreements.

Mr. President,

Kenya remains firmly committed to the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and is gratified with the status of its implementation, both at national and regional levels. Despite the progress made, small arms and other conventional weapons continue to end up in the hands of wrong non-state actors, with attendant adverse implications on peace and security, leading to political stability in many countries. In order to curb this trend, Kenya requests the Secretary-General to undertake a study into the possibility of a legal instrument to control international transfers of conventional arms.

Kenya also supports proposals for the enhancement of peace support operation capabilities of the United Nations. Any mandate for peacekeeping forces should be clear and precise. Adequate resources must be made available to the commanders in the field to enable them execute their mandates effectively. Intervention in crisis situations must also be timely, to prevent undue loss of life. Kenya welcomes vital contributions to peace and security made by regional organizations forging predictable partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations.

Further, Kenya endorses the proposal to establish a strategic military capacity to reinforce UN peacekeeping and the creation of a standby brigade for rapid deployment of the organization's civilian police in peacekeeping operations.

We strongly support the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a Peace-Building Commission and Fund by December 31, 2005. We believe such a peace building commission will contribute to the realization of real peace in many regions. However, it is important that critical questions about form, function and decision-making authority be resolved.

In our own neighbourhood, the importance of post-conflict peace building has become a bigger priority after the recent successes of the Sudan and Somalia mediation efforts, which Kenya chaired under the auspices of IGAD.

Kenya commends the international community for the excellent response during the Oslo pledging conference towards reconstruction of Southern Sudan. We urge similar response to support the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia in setting up and implementing national security, stabilization and reconstruction strategy.

We also call upon the Security Council to play a more proactive role in the search for broad consensus for peace and thus enhance the capacity of the Transitional Federal Government to establish basic institutions.

Mr. President,

On the reform of the Security Council, it is necessary to make it far more equitable and representative of the UN global constituency. The procedures and methods of work of the Council should be changed to secure transparency and dialogue with the UN membership.

Furthermore, future composition of the Security Council should proceed on the basis of sovereign equality of states and equitable geographical representation.

Kenya welcomes the proposal to develop stronger relationship between the United Nations and Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations. For Africa, there is abundant political will in our continent to make the African Union succeed. I believe external support, especially from the United Nations and the international community at large, would make the African Union work better.

The establishment of an African Union peace and Security Council, and an Intervention Force planned to be realized by 2009, are measures aimed at advancing political stability in Africa to underpin economic development. Already the African Union has taken the lead in Burundi, Darfur in the Sudan where deployment of peacekeeping missions have preceded international action by the United Nations.

The recent pledges by the Group of Eight countries to double aid to Africa and grant 100 percent debt relief to 18 developing countries was welcome. We hope they will honour their pledges and commitments in conformity with the impact forged at the 2002 Monterrey Summit on Financing for Development. Support by the G8 will help African countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. President,

Kenya affirms the centrality of gender equality and recognizes the critical role that women must play in development. We also recognize that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals depend on the empowerment of women. As part of our effort to fully implement this objective, my Government has adopted a National Policy on Gender Development. The aim is to integrate women in decision-making through legal, regulatory and institutional reforms.

Mr. President,

I am convinced that if we are to attain our common objective of revitalizing the United Nations, we should embrace the vision presented by the Secretary-General in his package of reforms. This will require political will and leadership on our part. I, therefore, urge member states to seize this opportunity and endorse proposals on which there is broad consensus. As we contemplate strengthening and renewing our Organization, we should do so for posterity.

Thank you, Mr. President.