



*PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM
OF LESOTHO TO THE UNITED NATIONS*

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STATEMENT

BY

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OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

DELIVERED AT

THE SIXTIETH SESSION OF THE

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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NEW YORK

Mr. President,

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellency, Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,

My delegation associates itself with the compliments extended to you on your election to the presidency of this session, and to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping of Gabon.

Mr. President,

The United Nations was born sixty-years ago when the brutality of war proved way beyond human comprehension. The Organization became a source of hope, for it was founded on the inalienable, interlinked and mutually interdependent pillars of development, human rights and security.

Member States of this Organization have, over the years, yearned for its reform in order to make it more democratic and responsive to the needs of all nations, rich and poor, big and small, strong and weak. We should recall that the last reform of the United Nations was in 1963, a good four decades ago! Against this background, my delegation pays tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his Report entitled "In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All". This report formed the basis for discussions by Member States as they prepared for the five-year review of the Millennium Declaration as well as this sixtieth session of the General Assembly. It raises critical issues regarding the reform of this world body to enable it to meet the challenges and threats of the twenty-first century. A massive task indeed! However, we have noted with regret that some Member States have relegated to the back, critical issues of development, giving priority instead, to security issues, particularly the reform of the Security Council. As result of this approach, we foresee an emerging untenable and unwarranted situation with the

potential to divide regions and/or continents, as well as adversely affect cordial relations among States.

Mr. President,

In order to move in unison, the international community should strive to simultaneously advance the global development, human rights and security agendas. It is common cause that the HIV and AIDS pandemic has emerged as a major threat to development, reversing all the gains that have been made. It is also common cause that the ravages of extreme poverty continue to haunt us. Needless to mention that extreme poverty constitutes a violation of human dignity. Armed conflicts also hamper development. Africa presents a classical example of how these menaces compromise not only peace and security, but development as well, thus militating against respect for human rights. Indeed, it is no coincidence that development has been one of the key objectives of most, if not all, major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

Hence, my delegation welcomes the efforts of those donor countries that have achieved the 0.7 percent target of gross national income and 0.2 percent of gross national income for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), as Official Development Assistance (ODA). We also welcome initiatives by some countries to set up timetables for fulfilling their ODA targets. However, we reiterate our appeal that developed countries abide by their commitments to help developing countries in all the relevant areas. They have to accelerate increased flows of ODA and of Foreign Direct Investment. They also have to adopt appropriate measures to fully integrate small and vulnerable economies into the multilateral trading system, cancel debt, transfer technology, render financial and technical assistance, and provide capacity-building programmes for developing countries.

On this auspicious occasion, my delegation expresses sincere appreciation for all initiatives recently taken to address the needs of developing countries, especially debt cancellation extended by the G8 to Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). However, we appeal for debt cancellation for all Least Developed Countries in order to enable them to redirect their meagre resources to national development programmes. For, it is an irrefutable fact that a substantial percentage of the national budgets of Least Developed Countries that do not fall within the HIPC category is consumed by servicing their debts.

Mr. President,

Lesotho supports the launching of a series of "Quick Wins" as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report, as this would go a long way in broadening commitment to the MDGs, as well as promoting economic growth in many developing countries. In our view, the criteria for the selection of countries for the implementation of the Quick Wins should be fair and transparent.

Mr. President,

Terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors, existence of nuclear weapons, and armed conflicts, top the list of global security issues. There is therefore an urgent need to conclude a comprehensive convention on terrorism. My delegation hopes that the General Assembly will soon initiate negotiations on an international instrument to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors. We regret the fact that the 2005 conference to review the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was not able to reach consensus. However, we wish to emphasize the need for all States parties to adhere to the three pillars of the Treaty, namely, disarmament, non proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We also wish to encourage the nuclear-weapon states that have not yet ratified or accede to the NPT and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to become parties to those important Treaties.

The notorious usage of small arms and light weapons in armed conflict is well documented. Thus, Lesotho regrets the inability to adopt a legally binding document by the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We also consider the issue of prevention of internal armed conflicts by the international community as important. While we support the moral obligation behind the proposed new concept of the "responsibility to protect", we suggest that the issue be subjected to further consideration by Member States, guided by the fundamental principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Needless to say that the sanctity of Article 51 of the Charter should be preserved.

Mr. President,

The Kingdom of Lesotho considers it the responsibility of the international community, with the United Nations playing the central role, to put in place effective

measures aimed to prevent genocide, ethnic cleansing, and the atrocities perpetrated on women and children caught up in armed conflicts. Consequently, my delegation considers the enhanced role of the major organs of the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly, to be of paramount importance. One of the major constraints of the United Nations is that it lacks a mechanism designed to avoid State collapse and the slide to war, or to assist countries in their transition from war to peace. It is within this context that Lesotho supports the proposed establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission.

In the area of human rights, we support the elevation of the Commission on Human Rights to a Human Rights Council, a body that would be apolitical and insist on the protection of civil and political rights as well as on the protection of economic, social and cultural rights. To my delegation, the flaws of the Commission lay mostly in its focus, and not necessarily in its size.

It is in this twenty-first century that peace, security, the right to self-determination, respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms have to be guaranteed as the norm rather than the exception. Hence, our call for the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, and complete withdrawal from their occupied territories; the independence of the Saharawi people; the lifting of the unilateral economic embargo against the people of Cuba; and the end to armed conflicts, particularly in Africa. These matters must be addressed and resolved urgently, comprehensively, honestly, without fear or favour, and without malice to anybody.

I thank you.