

Republic of Malawi

ONE UNITED NATIONS:
THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. BINGU WA MUTHARIKA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

To the

SIXTIETH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Mr President

I wish at the outset to congratulate you on your election *as* President of the Sixtieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly and also for the excellent manner in which you and your Bureau are steering the affairs of this session. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full support in your work.

I also commend your predecessor, His Excellency Mr Jean Ping, for his outstanding and astute leadership during the Fifty Ninth Session, during which important decisions were made concerning our organisation.

I further commend His Excellency Mr Kofi Annan, our Secretary-General, for the dynamic and sterling leadership of the United Nations.

Mr President

The theme of the Session of the General Assembly which is "For a Stronger and More Effective United Nations: **The Follow up and Implementation of the Outcome of the High-Level Plenary Meeting." is germane to the**

proposals for reforms of the organisation. There is the imperative of taking stock of its strengths and weaknesses so that we can have a better future.

Within the context of this theme, the Secretary General, through his report "In Larger Freedom" has made important proposals that will make the United Nations more effective and credible. The proposals aim at enabling the United Nations to provide **the required leadership in the** implementation of the global development agenda and the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. President

My country, Malawi, has followed closely the debate on the report. I feel that from the diverse opinions that have been expressed, a consensus is emerging on the need to implement UN reforms and to make the organisation respond more effectively to the challenge of change.

Let me, however, express the view that in addition to the reforms of the Security Council, there are other equally important reforms of the United Nations that are critical to the realisation of the global development agenda. I will turn to these

later. For the moment, it is critical that we remain focused so that all elements of the reform receive our undivided attention.

Mr President

Let me assure you that Malawi appreciates the role played by the international community, including the United Nations, in efforts to eradicate poverty and promote development and prosperity for all. The just ended High-Level Plenary meeting is one such initiative that offers great hopes for the way forward. However, previous experience has taught us the lesson that although a lot is generally said and promised within the United Nations, little or nothing is delivered. It is my earnest hope that the outcome of this session will not turn out to be another talk show.

Mr President

Malawi faces serious problems in instituting an effective system of political and economic governance. My country continues to face critical challenges in determining our political agenda, which in turn affects our development efforts. We still face extreme poverty, food shortages, hunger

and malnutrition. HIV/AIDS continues to claim more lives.. Malaria is still killing millions each year.

Over and above these problems, Mr. President, we face mounting domestic and external debt, unfair and inequitable global trading system, prevalence of conflicts and political instability. We therefore feel that for any UN reforms to be meaningful, we need assistance in the areas of good governance.'

Mr. President

In Malawi, we are promoting good governance by pursuing sound macro-economic policies, reduction in public expenditure, bench-marking the activities and performance of the Civil Service and fighting corruption at all levels. We have also instituted effective reforms of the private sector and through dialogue, the business community is now responding positively to the economic and social reforms. In many of these reforms, I can say that we have made a good beginning.

It is for this reason that my Government welcomed the establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism under the New Partnership for African

Development (NEPAD) Programme. Our accession to the African Peer Review Mechanism is a manifestation of our desire to adopt policies and practices that emphasize accountability and transparency in public sector management.

Mr. President

Malawi has made efforts to implement the Millennium Development Goals. Our report entitled "**Malawi and the Millennium Development Goals: Challenges and Achievements**", has been circulated. However, my country is facing severe constraints in implementing the MDGs, because we , are allocating a significant amount of limited resources to servicing external debt and for managing the HIV/AIDS pandemic, at the cost of social and economic transformation necessary to fight poverty.

Malawi, therefore, supports the proposal to find comprehensive and durable solutions to the external debt problem. In that regard, we welcome the recent proposal by the G8 to cancel 100% of outstanding debt owed by 18 countries, including 14 from Africa. I would like to appeal to all creditors to follow this noble example because debt

pandemic. The people of Malawi have welcomed the provision of voluntary counselling as well *as free anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs. For instance, since the free treatment programme started early this year, we have established over 30 anti-retroviral (ARV) clinics 'throughout the country for people to receive counselling and treatment. We expect to expand rapidly* to provide treatment to around 80,000 persons by July next year.

I therefore welcome the call by the High-Level Meeting, to provide, as a priority, assistance for HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment in African countries, on a grant basis, and the need to encourage pharmaceutical companies to make anti-retroviral drugs affordable and accessible in Africa.

My Government appeals for more funding to enable us to adopt a holistic approach, to take into account the medical, economic, political and social impacts of the HIV/AIDS on the implementation of the MDGs.

I take this opportunity to commend all countries that continue to make contributions to the Global Fund. The Global Fund has enabled Malawi to introduce

free ARV treatment programme for those infected by HIV/AIDS.

Mr President

In terms of agriculture and food security, Malawi has not fared well this year. My country is facing severe food shortages due to the drought that we have had since January this year. As a result of very poor harvest, we shall require about 270,000 metric tons to feed about 4.2 million people who are in need of food up to the next harvest season in April/May 2006. I am therefore, appealing to the world community to assist us to source more food for our people.

I am grateful for pledges of relief food assistance made by our cooperating partners such as the World Food Programme (WFP), the British Government; the European Union, the Japanese Government, the United States Government, the Belgian Government and Norwegian Government. We are also grateful to the UN Secretary-General for the special appeal he has made for food aid for Southern Africa ,

Mr. President

I am pleased to announce that we the people of Malawi are also doing something to feed ourselves. We have made provision in our 2005/2006 national budget to buy food for our people. We have also established a **Feed the Nation Fund**, through which people in Malawi from all walks of life are making donations for purchasing food for the poorest of the poor. The response has been overwhelming.

As a medium to long term solution, we have adopted concrete policies with the aim to reduce our dependence on rain-fed agriculture. We have established a full Ministry responsible for Irrigation and Water Development. We look forward to technical assistance from countries such as Egypt, Sudan and Israel to assist us to put more land under irrigation farming.

Mr. President

As part of the reform of the UN system, I wish to bring to the attention of the General Assembly an important aspect of the reform of the United Nations. This involves the determination of eligibility for membership in the United Nations.

As you know, the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights guarantees the right of all peoples of the world to belong to the United Nations and that no country should be denied membership in this organization. Malawi believes that the United Nations was founded on the principle of inclusivity in its membership.

That is why we in Malawi call for the admission of the Republic of China (Taiwan) as a member of the United Nations.

This request is made on the premise that following the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the new states that emerged therefrom had expressed their desire to become sovereign and independent members of the United Nations. These countries were Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. These countries were accepted and were readily admitted as members of this organisation. This was a political decision.

In the same way, when the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia broke up into separate

states of Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovenia, each state was admitted in the United Nations. This was a political decision.

Czechoslovakia broke up into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and each state was admitted into the United Nations.

In South East Asia, Singapore pulled out of the Federation of Malaya and became a member of the United Nations. Later, East Timor broke away from Indonesia and was also admitted as a member of the United Nations. These were also political decisions.

Mr. President

The Government of Malawi is therefore puzzled that the Republic of China, which took a similar political decision, is denied membership in the United Nations. How can the United Nations stand for equity and justice when it is denying membership to over 23 million people who contribute significantly to global trade and development? How can the United Nations justify its denial of membership to Taiwan when the

countries listed above were admitted? Why is Taiwan being discriminated against by the United Nations?

Unless these questions are honestly answered, observers will conclude that the United Nations is applying double standards. The Government of Malawi believes that the United Nations should use the same standards to grant membership to the Republic of China.

I am therefore appealing that the United Nations should extend membership to the Taiwanese people in the same way as it has done for countries of the Eastern Europe, and South East Asia.

This will enable the dynamic and resourceful people of Taiwan to play their rightful role in global affairs, industrialization, **trade** and social development. I believe that the admission of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in the United Nations will also bring credibility to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

I thank you for your attention.
Long Live the United Nations.