



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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STATEMENT

BY

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SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

TO THE

**61ST REGULAR SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

25th September, 2006
New York, NY

Madam President,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Zambian delegation, I congratulate you, on your election as president of the 61st Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly. It is indeed significant to have a lady presiding over the highest office of the general assembly, after almost three decades. This to us, attests to the commitment of the united nations to the principle of gender equality.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome a new member to the United Nations, the Republic of Montenegro.

Madam President,

I wish to pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Jan Eliasson, the Foreign Minister of Sweden, who successfully presided over the 60th Regular Session. He rendered selfless commitment and devotion to the search for consensus on a number of issues, including the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. It is pleasing to note that, during his presidency, a number of decisions were taken, including the establishment of the Peace-building Commission and the Human Rights Council.

Allow me to also pay fitting tribute to the outgoing secretary-general of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, for the outstanding leadership he has provided to our organisation, particularly, in his efforts to reform it into a more vibrant and accountable body. His vision and stewardship of the organisation has set the United Nations on a new course. We wish him well in his future endeavours as he leaves office. It is now up to us member states to summon sufficient will to make his vision a reality.

Madam President,

The world today is faced with challenges of extreme poverty and under-development, conflicts among and between nations and terrorism, which have given rise to increased insecurity all over the world. In addition, human trafficking is on the increase worldwide. Often, innocent women and children in search of a better life, are unwittingly being sold for the sole purpose of engaging them in illicit activities. This is a gross violation of human rights, which must be seriously addressed by the international community.

The 2005 Summit Outcome Document set a world agenda in addressing these challenges. Much has been achieved but more remains to be done if we are to build a world body that is effective and relevant to the challenges faced. Indeed, as Mr. Kofi Annan has said in his report, In Larger Freedom, "The world will not enjoy development without security or security without development, and it will not enjoy either without respect for human rights."

Madam President,

The main guiding principles of the United Nations Charter incorporate the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We believe that without the protection of these rights and freedoms, meaningful development cannot be achieved.

As one of the 47 member states elected to the newly established Human Rights Council, Zambia is committed to upholding the tenets of human rights in our country and the world at large. In this regard, Zambia commends the United Nations for establishing the Human Rights Council, and as a pioneer member, pledges to give it all the support that it will require. We commit ourselves to assist in formulating rules and structures designed to ensure a strong council that is transparent, non-selective, non-politicised and one which promotes dialogue and cooperation among member states.

I am pleased to state that Zambia has made progress in consolidating human rights and good governance. Zambia has further strengthened the rule of law and upheld the highest standards of individual freedoms for all citizens without discrimination based on sex, colour, race or religious affiliation. In this regard, we appeal to the international community to assist us strengthen and build the capacities of human rights institutions and all related institutions that have an important role to play in the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

permit me at this juncture to thank the international community for electing Zambia to the Human Rights Council, with the second highest number of votes.

Madam President,

With regard to increased global insecurity, Zambia reaffirms the view that a new vision of collective security is required. Member states of the United Nations expect a collective mechanism to address threats, such as war, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, organised crime, civil conflict, infectious diseases, extreme poverty and environmental degradation. If the United Nations is to strengthen the operations of this collective mechanism, member states must work through the United Nations Security Council and other United Nations agencies to develop a stronger anti-terrorism, non-proliferation of nuclear arms, disarmament and anti-crime prevention regimes.

Zambia will continue to actively pursue measures intended to curtail terrorism through various actions, including taking appropriate national legislative reforms. To this end, we welcome the recent adoption by the general assembly of the global counter-terrorism strategy and look forward to the adoption of the comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

Madam President,

Our organisation cannot afford to ignore addressing situations that threaten international peace and security, such as the recent case of Lebanon. Pitifully, we witnessed the case of inaction of the Security Council, a body charged with the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. This state of affairs only reaffirms the need to reform the Security Council, both in its enlargement and working methods. In this regard, Zambia reaffirms Africa's well known position on this matter.

At this stage, it would be remiss of me if I did not say something about the Great Lakes Region, which is emerging from a protracted period of conflict followed by a period of successful transition towards democracy. The international conference on the Great Lakes region will be holding its second summit in Nairobi in December, 2006 to adopt the draft pact on security, stability and development of the region. In this regard, we need the continued political and financial support of the international community to ensure its adoption.

It is important to confirm that the peace-building and development process in the Great Lakes Region has reached a very advanced stage at all the three-dimensional levels, namely: international partnership, regional ownership and national stewardship.

The vision for an integrated and sustainable human development in the Great Lakes Region is now reassured. The cessation of conflicts in this region, has already fed into the collective will to transform the sub-region into a place of sustainable peace, political security and development.

Madam President,

Extreme poverty and deprivation breed disease. The number of people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and the deaths caused by aids has continued to grow in the world today. Furthermore, between 350- 500 million people per year are exposed to malaria and this disease is estimated to be a number one cause of mortality in most developing countries. Zambia, like many of the developing countries who are adversely affected by these diseases, supports all the efforts made by the international community in combating the HIV/AIDS scourge, malaria and tuberculosis.

We, therefore, welcome the creation of an international drug purchase facility to combat aids, tuberculosis and malaria. This will not only facilitate easy access to medicine but will also lower the costs, and therefore, benefit many countries, especially in the developing world.

Madam President,

Poverty in the world today accounts for many of the social and economic injustices that people are subjected to in many developing countries. Four years ago, a bargain was struck in Monterrey between developed and developing countries on implementation of a comprehensive strategy bold enough to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Developed countries were urged to support these efforts with action on aid, trade and debt relief.

While we commend the developed countries for taking tangible steps to fulfil their commitments, we call upon them to do so as a matter of urgency. It is saddening to note that six years after the millennium declaration was signed, the majority of our people in Africa are still exposed to abject poverty and live on less than one us dollar a day. Although there has been significant progress in achieving the MDGs, much more remains to be done in order to reverse the negative trends of poverty and the continued marginalisation of people across the world.

Madam President,

We call for the removal of the unjust multi-lateral trading system, which continues to hamper the fair participation of the developing and least developed countries in the global market. We would like to draw the attention of this assembly to the role of our developing partners, particularly, in the quick and concrete implementation of the Doha Development Agenda. It should be pointed out that with fair trading practices, developing and least developed countries would take a significant step towards self sustenance and reduce dependence on aid.

We further welcome the outcome of the Gleneagles Summit where the G8 leaders pledged to increase aid to Africa by us \$25 billion a year by 2010. We also extend our gratitude to these leaders for extending and deepening debt relief to the poorest

countries through the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). This initiative has resulted in the 100 per cent debt cancellation of the debt owed to the international multilateral financial institutions by the poor countries that have reached the HIPC completion point. Zambia is one such country.

Our gratitude also goes to the other cooperating partners for agreeing to expand aid to developing countries by about us \$50 billion. These resources will indeed contribute to the facilitation of the achievement of the MDGs.

Madam President,

Although in the recent past we have seen an increase in new commitments of aid resources, actions and a reaffirmation of the principle of mutual accountability, there is still an urgent need to ensure that aid is efficiently managed and used effectively for the attainment of the MDGs. It is also equally important to closely monitor the donor commitments and aid flows targeted at achieving the MDGs that we set for ourselves in improving the lives of the poor and most vulnerable in the global community.

The people in developing countries have been listening attentively to the promises that we have made at various international fora. They continue to monitor these commitments. Their expectations and aspirations are very high. It is therefore, incumbent on us to ensure that those commitments and promises are fulfilled.

Madam President,

The 21st century has been declared the century for the development of Africa. Let us, therefore, show true commitment to this cause. In a world where there is no true partnership between the rich and poor nations there can be no global security, no universal justice, no human rights and no meaningful development. We all, both rich and poor nations alike, have to work together more than ever before, to create a sense of equal partnership. We all need to fulfil our commitments within a given timeframe, and enter into new ones in order to reach our goal of a world, free of hunger, extreme poverty and disease, and indeed where we can live in a secure, clean and sustainable environment.

I Thank You.