

STATEMENT BY H. E. JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE, PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA,
AT THE 62ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK,
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*Your Excellency Srgjan Kerim, President of the United Nations General Assembly;
Your Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations;
Excellencies Heads of State and Government;
Distinguished Representatives;
Ladies and Gentlemen.*

Let me begin by congratulating you, Dr. Kerim, for your well deserved election as President of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly. You can count on Tanzania's full support and cooperation as you discharge your mandate. I also commend your predecessor, Madam Shaikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, for having skillfully presided over the 61st session.

We congratulate Mr. Ban Ki-moon for his unanimous election as the eighth Secretary General of the United Nations, which reflects his distinguished diplomatic track record, integrity and commitment to international diplomacy.

I also thank him for the honour and trust he has bestowed upon my country, by appointing an accomplished Tanzanian academic and diplomat to the post of UN Deputy Secretary General. I take this opportunity to once again congratulate Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro, for her appointment to this high office. I trust that such a combination of diligence and devoted leadership will steer this important institution towards greater heights of success.

Climate Change

Mr. President;

I highly commend the Secretary General for his decision to convene the High Level Event on Climate Change four days ago. The meeting gave us an opportunity to discuss the state of health of our common planet. It also gave us the opportunity to renew our commitment to take the necessary steps to correct the mistakes we have done.

The recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has confirmed that warming of the earth's climate system is indisputable and is attributable to, by and large, human activities.

Africa and many Small Island States contribute the least to the greenhouse gases that cause this phenomenon; yet, significant impact of climate change is evident on our countries. Most countries are experiencing severe floods, frequent and prolonged droughts, reduced water supply, decline in crop yields, rising sea levels, and an

increase in water borne diseases. These impacts of climate change can affect African countries' ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Climate change threatens to undo the results of decades of development efforts.

In Tanzania, for certain, the impact of global warming is real and visible. There has been a steady increase in temperature for the past 30 years, adversely affecting almost all sectors of the economy.

Severe droughts have been recurrent in the past few years. Water levels in Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika have dropped significantly. There has been a dramatic recession of 7 km of Lake Rukwa in the Western part of the country in the past 50 years. About 80 per cent of the glacier on Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest in Africa, has been lost since 1912.

We have prepared a National Adaptation Program of Action. There is a national programme of planting over 200 million tree seedlings per annum besides having reserved 24 percent of our territory for national parks and 38 percent for forest reserves.

We trust that countries like Tanzania, which have reserved such large tracts of land for protection of wildlife and forests, including an ambitious tree planting programme for global good, would be adequately compensated for their significant contribution to carbon sequestration.

We have prepared a National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) and undertaken an indepth analysis of the impact of climate change on agriculture, health, water as well as a technological needs assessment for adaptation and poverty reduction.

Tanzania hopes that the Climate Change Adaptation Fund would be successfully negotiated and concluded together with other proposed innovative sources of financing discussed during the High Level Event earlier this week.

Mr. President;

Since the causes and consequences of climate change are global, international cooperation and partnership in addressing them is imperative. Tanzania supports the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), which assists developing countries to achieve sustainable development and requires developed countries to fulfill their commitments under the Kyoto Protocol.

So far Africa has the least number of CDM projects. Of the over 800 projects around the world, Africa has about 20 projects only. This inequitable distribution is of concern to us and must be resolved in order for it to contribute meaningfully to the sustainable development of Africa.

I wish to emphasize that international collective action is critical in developing an effective response to global warming. Indeed a review process to consider further commitment of the Parties under the Kyoto Protocol beyond 2012 is urgent and necessary. Tanzania promises to participate actively at the Bali Summit.

UN Reforms/One UN

Mr. President;

Tanzania welcomes the recent milestones in the UN reform process namely the establishment of the Peace Building Commission, the Human Rights Council and the Central Emergency Relief Fund. We attach great importance to these new initiatives and we want to contribute to their success.

In its report of November 2006 entitled, "Delivering as One", the UN Panel on System-wide Coherence made valuable recommendations, including the establishment of a "One UN" system at the country level. For, we in Tanzania, believe that the development coordination agenda is best served when we have at the country level one programme, one budgetary framework, one leader, and one office.

Tanzania is pleased to be among the eight "One UN" pilot countries. The One UN Programme is for us a logical development from the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), a framework that is fully aligned with our national priorities. The efficiencies in aid delivery expected through "One UN" will certainly contribute to enhancing our capacity to attain the MDGs.

I call upon member states to give our organization, the United Nations, the resources it needs to implement this pilot project. The project should not fail for lack of resources. I also urge the Bretton Woods Institutions to take a keener interest in this initiative and join in the efforts to realize its objectives.

The need to make the UN Security Council more representative is an age old demand of all of us. Time has come to walk the talk. We need to move from rhetoric to action. Now is the time. Tanzania assures the entire UN membership our whole-hearted support and cooperation in this process.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Mr. President;

We are now halfway through the time-line of 2015 set for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Yet we are not half-way in realizing the targets as spelt out at the Millennium Summit of 2000. We are in this unfortunate state of affairs because the additional resources expected and promised by the developed countries have not come forth. I urge this august General Assembly to renew its appeal to the developed nations to deliver on their promise.

In this regard, we welcome the initiative mentored by the Norwegian Prime Minister Mr. Jens Stoltenberg to launch a global campaign to mobilize resources for achieving the MDG 4 on reducing infant mortality rates and MDG 5 on reducing maternal mortality rates. Tanzania supports the effort and we are happy to be associated with it. I appeal to all of us to support the initiative. It is our hope that, developed nations will support the campaign by providing the required resources.

On the same vein, we commend Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for establishing the African MDG Steering Group. Africa is excited about it. We trust that it will give new impetus in assisting Africa attain all MDGs.

We also welcome the historic decision taken by the President of the General Assembly to convene a special summit of leaders to discuss the MDGs during this session. We support this wise decision of our President for we believe it will provide the needed momentum for the timely achievement of the MDGs in Africa.

Regional Issues: Africa

Mr. President;

Tanzania has played, and will continue to play, its historic role in the search for peace, security, stability and development in Great Lakes region. I thank the United Nations and the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes for their support to the processes of the International Conference on the Great Lakes. As we all know, at the Nairobi Conference held in December, 2006, an historic Pact on Peace, Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region was signed. A new era of hope, collective security and cooperation for development was ushered in. For sure, if the letter and spirit of the Pact are implemented, the Great Lakes Region will be a completely new place from the one we are used to know.

We are happy that member states have committed to ratify the Pact by the end of this year. This will enable the Pact to come into force. We look forward to continued support from the UN, friends of the Great Lakes and the international community at large as we endeavour to get durable peace, stability and sustainable development.

Mr. President;

Burundi and DRC

We are happy with the tremendous progress made in Burundi. Peace has been restored and life has come back to normal. Tanzania will continue to work with the region and South Africa to ensure the full operationalization of the peace agreement signed between the Burundi government and the FNL-Palipehutu.

We are concerned with the fluidity of the situation in North Kivu. We hope wisdom will prevail on the parties concerned to give peace a chance. The people of the DRC deserve it. We in Tanzania promise to play whatever part may be required of us.

With restored peace in Burundi and many parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), it is incumbent upon us in the international community to encourage and assist refugees to go back to their respective countries. This is what the Tripartite Commissions involving Tanzania, UNHCR and the respective countries of Burundi and DRC have been doing. Our joint Commissions have been encouraging repatriation of refugees on voluntary basis and we have been assisting those who came forward. The results are encouraging but things could be better. A word of encouragement from this organization could make a difference.

Mr. President;

Tanzania believes that the return of refugees to their country of origin is a sovereign right which should not be denied. It is also the ultimate testimony and guarantor of the peace so attained. It is not fair, it is not right for people to continue to live in refugee camps after peace has been restored in their countries of origin.

Situation in Darfur

Mr. President;

The current progress with regard to Darfur gives us hope. The adoption of Security Council Resolution 1769 to deploy a hybrid force of peacekeepers from the African Union and the United Nations, and the renewed political dialogue among the parties to the conflict, holds promise for the stalled peace process and the humanitarian crisis that unfortunately persists there.

Tanzania applauds the unique partnership which has evolved between the African Union and the United Nations. We stand ready to contribute troops to the hybrid force.

Somalia

Mr. President;

We are encouraged by recent developments with regard to internal political dialogue in Somalia. We are equally happy with the attention given to Somalia by the Security Council and the United Nations Secretary General. We welcome the recent Security Council resolution 1772 (2007) which supports the political process in Somalia and the role of AMISON. As member of the Somali Contact Group, Tanzania promises to continue to be pro-active and offers to contribute in the training of the Somali military.

Western Sahara

Mr. President;

The United Nations should remain seized with the issue of Western Sahara. Tanzania reaffirms its support for the inalienable right of the people of Saharawi to decide and choose the way forward. We urge the United Nations to intensify its efforts to find an honourable and just solution to this longstanding decolonization issue.

The Middle East

The crisis inside the Palestinian territories is a matter of great concern to us. Tanzania remains supportive of efforts aimed at creating two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side, at peace with each other. This presents, in our view, the best hope for sustainable peace in the region. We applaud and welcome the renewed international interest and effort in line with the relevant UN resolutions.

Lebanese Situation

The Lebanese government and peoples need and deserve the continued support of the UN and all of us in the international community as they reconstruct and stabilize their country. In this regard, Tanzania is glad to be a party to the efforts being expended by the United Nations, through our modest contribution to the Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). We are ready to increase our contribution whenever required to do so.

Conclusion

Mr. President;

In conclusion, Mr. President, Tanzania reaffirms its belief in and commitment to multilateralism and the United Nations. You can count on Tanzania's continued support to this organization and the ideals it stands for.

I thank you.