



The President
REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY,
PRESIDENT PAUL KAGAME,
AT THE HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING
OF THE 60th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
UNITED NATIONS**

New York, 14 September 2005

Mr. President;

Your Majesties;

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government;

Your Excellency Secretary-General of the United Nations;

Distinguished Delegates;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

We meet this week to mark the passage of sixty eventful years in the life of the United Nations, and to reaffirm our belief in its principles.

We also meet to renew and breathe fresh life into the Organization, to consider the reforms necessary, and to review the progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the Millennium Summit, held here five years ago.

Looking back over these years, it is clear that there have been some remarkable successes in fulfilling the UN Charter principles.

But there have also been a number of serious failures.

Rwanda has experienced both.

This is also a great opportunity for us to reflect on our relations and responsibilities as sovereign nations.

It is clearer today than ever before that in this age of globalisation, interdependence is self-evident.

By recognising this interdependence, we accept our collective interests and responsibilities, whether we are developed or developing nations.

These include the imperative for development and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, peace and security, and human rights and the rule of law.

Mr. President,

There is no greater challenge facing humanity today than poverty and underdevelopment.

For Sub-Saharan Africa, it is unacceptable that, despite our commitment at the Millennium Summit five years ago, the prediction is that conditions will worsen by 2015.

So, what has gone wrong in the last five years?

- Was the pledge to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 overambitious, or were the commitments to the Millennium Development Goals overestimated?*
- Did we fail to assess the resource gaps and policy reforms that needed to be addressed?*
- Or are we contented with admirable commitments and international declarations at the expense of tangible actions and results to achieve the Millennium Development Goals?*
- Most importantly, should we go back to the drawing board, 5 years down the road, because we have suddenly realised*

that the initial roadmap was misconceived? I guess the answer is NO.

Whatever the case, it is clear that we must do things radically differently and in an accelerated manner.

We must devise and agree to faithfully implement innovative and practicable measures to ensure that we reverse current trends.

This will require commitment to implement the Monterrey consensus on financing for development, including the frontloading of future commitments.

Noteworthy are such initiatives as the International Financing Facility.

But for such initiatives and commitments to succeed, there should be clear and practical modalities of implementation.

We welcome the proposal to ease supply-side constraints and commodity price shocks in order to take the fullest possible advantage of increased market access.

Mr. President,

It has become abundantly clear to us that attainment of the Millennium Development Goals is contingent on good political and economic governance.

In Rwanda we are trying to do our bit. We have implemented several political and economic reforms over the last decade, and so far the indication is that we are on the right track.

Africa's own peer review mechanism also gives us optimism, and further signals the Continent's shared commitment to a common destiny.

All in all, the progress we have made gives us reason to be optimistic that, with enhanced support of our development partners, we could attain the Millennium Development Goal targets by 2015.

Mr. President,

As we all know, there is a strong relationship between security and development.

This nexus between peace, security and development is crystal clear to us in Rwanda and the wider Great Lakes region of East and Central Africa.

Our own experience in Rwanda has shown us that insecurity caused by reckless and irresponsible governance can cause immense suffering, adverse to human development.

Let me also stress the importance of our collective responsibility to deal with terrorism, and to protect populations under threat of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.

Never again should the international community's response to these crimes be found wanting.

Let us resolve to take collective action in a timely and decisive manner. Let us also commit to put in place early warning

mechanisms and ensure that preventive interventions are the rule rather than the exception.

Mr President;

We believe in the UN as a symbol of effective multilateralism and as a framework for global partnership, mutual accountability, development, peace, and security.

But if the United Nations is to effectively fulfil its mission, then the following measures must be taken:

Firstly, to improve coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness within the UN System, so as to promote transparency and accountability;

Secondly, we believe that the reform process should enable States that are not members of the Security Council to participate more actively in its deliberative and decision-making processes, and, especially on issues that affect them.

A reformed Council should be seen by all States to be more representative, transparent, credible, and legitimate.

We support the establishment of the Peace Building Commission to mobilise resources, advise, and propose strategies for post-conflict recovery.

The success of the Commission, however, rests with the full ownership and participation of those it is meant to serve.

In conclusion, let me say that for us to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the onus is on us, the developing world.

Although we value the compact between rich and poor in this endeavour, we cannot shift the responsibility for our development entirely to other nations. But if we believe in our common humanity and our global partnership, then the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals makes good business sense, as well as promote global stability.

As we debate, posterity will not judge us kindly if we fail to seize the moment, and reverse the suffering of millions of the world's poor at the height of such unprecedented affluence and technological and scientific advances.

Thank you for your attention.