

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE,
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, AT THE GENERAL
DEBATE OF THE SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 29 SEPTEMBER 2015**
**Theme: "The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human
rights"**

Your Excellency, Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the General Assembly;

Your Excellency, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General;

Excellencies Heads of State and Government;

Distinguished Delegates;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I join those who spoke before me in congratulating you, on your well-deserved election to preside over the 70th Session of the General Assembly. Your election is a fitting tribute to your distinguished political career, having served as a Finance Minister, Foreign Minister and recently as Speaker of the Danish Parliament. It is also a reflection of the high regard this august Assembly has for your great country, Denmark. I would like to assure you of my country's full support and cooperation in discharging your duties and responsibilities.

Mr. President;

I wish to pay glowing tribute to your predecessor Hon. Sam Kahamba Kutesa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda for the outstanding manner in which he steered the affairs of the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly. Indeed, this great son of the African soil has done us proud. A deserving word of appreciation also goes to our illustrious Secretary-General His Excellency Ban Ki Moon and his staff, for their dedicated service and efforts in promoting the ideals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. President;

I also commend you, your predecessor and the Secretary General for the excellent work which has culminated into the adoption of the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with their **169 targets**. We sincerely hope that there will be reliable mechanisms of ensuring availability of means of implementation and follow-up. It was failure to have such mechanisms which was responsible for the short falls in the implementation of the MDGs.

Mr. President;

My delegation welcomes the theme designated for this general debate, namely **“The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human rights”**. Indeed, at 70 years the United Nations has not only withstood the test of time but has evolved and become a stronger organization. I am glad we all agree that a lot has been achieved in the past 7 decades. Equally, we agreed that not everything that the founding fathers envisaged the UN would do has been done satisfactorily.

The United Nations has succeeded to prevent another world war but challenges of preserving world peace and security remain. Interstate and intrastate conflicts and wars are many and on the increase. Terrorism has become a serious global threat. There are still too many people who live under conditions of abject poverty, squalor and deprivation in a world of unprecedented wealth.

The Partnership Between UN and Regional Organization

Mr. President;

Unlike 70 years ago, today there is better understanding, cooperation and partnership between countries and organizations in preserving peace and security. It is easier today for the world to come together for a course of peace than it was before.

As a matter of fact most of the conflicts we are witnessing today are being handled, first and foremost, by regional and sub-regional organizations. The UN, therefore, must seek to forge strategic partnership with these organizations. By taking advantage of the knowledge these organizations have of the history and nature of the crises, the key players and culture of the people, it would be easier to manage and resolve the conflicts. Where and when appropriate, the United Nations should invest in

strengthening the capacity of these organizations and their member states, in anticipating, detecting, preventing, managing and resolving conflicts. I am of the view that this capacity is urgently needed in Africa.

The Security Council Reform

Mr. President;

We highly commend the President of the Sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly and the Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) on reform of the Security Council, for efforts made. It is the wish of member states to see an acceleration of the negotiation process during this 70th Session. For the UN Security Council to remain what it was 70 years ago is incomprehensible and, to say, the least, unacceptable. It is high time the demands of the majority of the membership of the United Nations are heard and heeded too.

We must be mindful of the fact that the credibility of the UN depends on a more agile, representative and responsive Security Council. Let all of us muster political will and accomplish this long overdue task, for the sake of our Organization. In the mean time we must continue to support the Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

Peace Keeping Operation

Mr. President;

Peace keeping operations remain one of the most dependable instruments of promoting world peace and security. I believe it will remain so for many years to come. I am told there are about **125,000** men and women deployed in 16 peacekeeping missions across the world. Tanzania is proud to have contributed **1,322** of these gallant people who often times serve under challenging conditions. Sometimes they are compelled to serve in places where there is little or no peace to keep. Tanzania stands ready to contribute more whenever requested to do so.

Combating Terrorism

Mr. President;

We can not talk about security challenges of today without mentioning terrorism. This is the security challenge that the United Nations and the entire international community must remain vigilant in the coming decade. While reiterating our strongest condemnation of terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, we believe there is an urgent need to bolster efforts at all levels for fighting the scourge. Collectively, we must aspire to improve our preparedness, collaboration and response to the threat we face.

Global Epidemics

Mr. President;

The Ebola outbreak in West Africa last year is a stark reminder of how dangerous epidemics can be and how vulnerable we are as nations and people. More than **11,000** people lost their lives including citizens of the US and Spain and about **28,000** were infected. The economies of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone were devastated. Economic activities and services almost ground to a halt thus causing gigantic losses to the economies of the three countries. The World Bank estimates that they lost about **USD 2.2 billion** of their GDP as a result. There were about **7,000** children who lost their parents and about half a million people who became food insecure. More than **5 million** children lost valuable schooling and skills-development time. It requires mammoth recovery efforts to get these economies and societies back to where they were before the outbreak. Unfortunately, many countries in Africa also, suffered irrespective of how far a country is from the three affected countries. The tourist industry has been affected the most.

Mr. President;

The biggest lesson from the handling of this Ebola outbreak in West Africa is that the world needs to be better prepared to prevent and respond to epidemics in future. This was not the case unfortunately. It is in this regard to Ebola outbreak. It is in this regard that, we should all commend the Secretary General for the wise decision he took of establishing a High Level Panel on Global Health Crises to come up with

recommendations about how the world can respond better to public health emergencies of global concern in future.

I was given the honour of chairing the panel. It is premature for me to report anything substantive now to this august Assembly. We will complete our work in December, 2015 and I am sure our report will be brought before this Assembly for information and action. We look forward to your support.

US/Cuba Relations

Mr. President;

Tanzania welcomes the historic and momentous decision taken by the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba to restore diplomatic relations and reopen embassies of the two countries in Washington D.C. and Havana. We join the people of Cuba and United States in celebrating this landmark achievement.

We commend President Barack Obama and President Raul Castro for their bold and courageous leadership. The two leaders and countries have proved to all of us, the power of dialogue in finding solutions, even to deep rooted and long standing conflicts. We extend best wishes to our US and Cuban friends as they open a new chapter in their bilateral relations. We hope and appeal to the United States to lift the embargo which has condemned the people of Cuba to untold socio-economic hardships, poverty and misery for the last 50 years.

Palestine

Mr. President;

In the same vein, it is our wish that Israel and Palestine would resume the dialogue so that their long standing conflict can be resolved peacefully. It is high time the pain and suffering endured by the people of Palestine over the many decades was put to an end. Also, it is about time the people of Israel lived peacefully and harmoniously with their neighbours.

It is regrettable that we are celebrating seventy years of the founding of the United Nations this conflict remains unresolved. Tanzania subscribes and supports the two states

solution, with the state of Israel and a sovereign, contiguous and viable state of Palestine living side by side, in peace, security, harmony, mutual recognition, trust and cooperation. We believe it is possible and achievable. We must double our efforts.

The Question of Western Sahara

Mr. President;

Another outstanding matter which this organisation has to ensure that it does not continue to be left unresolved is the issue of Western Sahara. The lack of movement on the side of the United Nations to implement its decisions on the matter is both regrettable and incomprehensible. The people of Saharawi have waited for far too long to get the opportunity to determine their fate and future. Let this esteemed Organisation of ours muster political will and pluck up courage to do what it had long decided to do. At seventy years the United Nations is old enough and has accumulated a lot of wisdom and experience to put this matter to rest.

A Farewell Message

Mr. President;

On September 20th, 2006, I stood on this very podium, for the first time and addressed this august Assembly as the newly elected fourth President of my dear country: the United Republic of Tanzania. Today, I am standing here to bid farewell to you all as I am about to leave office at the completion of my two term mandate, as provided for in the Tanzania Constitution.

I thank all of you for the invaluable support and cooperation extended to me, my administration and my country in the past ten years that we have worked together. Kindly be assured that I will always value each and every one's contribution. I feel proud to have had the opportunity to work with all of you in promoting the ideals of the United Nations and contributed to the pursuit of world peace, security, stability and development.

As I take leave of you, I would like to assure you that Tanzania shall remain a faithful member and an unwavering supporter of the United Nations' Organisation. I am confident that you will find in my successor, a likeable and dependable friend and ally. Please accord him or her the necessary support and cooperation in fulfilling his or her duties and responsibilities.

Conclusion

Mr. President;

The road ahead for peace, security and development remains challenging but worthy the journey. It requires our renewed resolve and reaffirmation of our commitment to the ideals, values and principles laid down by the founding fathers of the United Nations seven decades ago in San Francisco. All nations, individually and collectively, should endeavour to promote them as we have been doing in the last seventy years. It can be done, play your part.

I thank you.