

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR DR. AUGUSTINE MAHIGA
(MP), MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EAST AFRICAN COOPERATION
OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF
THE SEVENTY THIRD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 27 SEPTEMBER 2018**

*Your Excellency, Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the
General Assembly;*

Your Excellency António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations;

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government;

Distinguished Delegates;

Salutations

I wish to congratulate you madam President for your well-deserved election to preside over the work of this 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Your election to this prestigious position as the fourth woman to this post in the history of this organisation and the first from Latin America is not only a unique accolade to you but also a testimony bestowed on you by the Member States of the Organisation. In this regard, Tanzania pledges its full support to you and your entire Bureau.

I also wish to pay special tribute to your predecessor, H.E. Miroslav Lajcak, for his successful leadership and commitment to the General Assembly during his Presidency. We wish him well in his future endeavours.

In the same manner, I commend Mr. Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General for his tireless efforts in steering the work of our Organization, especially in implementing the challenging reforms that are underway under his stewardship.

Ferry accident in Tanzania

Madam President;

I am greatly honoured to address this Assembly on behalf of my President, H.E. Dr. John Pombe Joseph Magufuli who could not join his colleagues in this Assembly following the tragic ferry accident which claimed the lives of more than 200 Tanzanian and left many others wounded. We appreciate the support of the international community during this difficult moment. May the souls of the departed rest in eternal peace.

Condolences

Madam President;

Before I proceed, let me express Tanzania's condolences from my Government to the United Nations Community and the entire world for the demise of Dr. Kofi Annan, an outstanding humanitarian and a defender and advocate of multilateralism. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, relatives and friends. May his soul rest in eternal peace, Amen.

Theme: *“Making the United Nations relevant to all people: global leadership and shared responsibilities for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies”*

Madam President;

This year theme “Making the United Nations Relevant to All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies” is very captivating and timely in reinforcing global governance to enhance the implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. This impetus from the United Nations comes, as it does, as multilateralism is eroding and needs to be rescued with collective and determined efforts.

Today, we are living in a world where most societies are neither peaceful, equitable nor sustainable. The world is still facing many violent conflicts and wars resulting in massive loss of lives, the threat of terrorism, destruction of the environment, refugee influxes, displaced persons, and global migration, hunger and poverty persists in many parts of the world. Addressing these challenges requires a collective visionary leadership and governance.

Unfortunately, all these miseries are mainly man-made and can be prevented if we resolve to take collective measures. Thus, continued and meaningful cooperation among member states is a prerequisite in addressing all challenges confronting the world. Through this platform, we can accentuate the relevance of this body to all nations and the people. Furthermore, we can shape global policies and norms to respond to different needs of diverse cultures and societies. Thus, a call for the United Nations to be relevant to all people is timely; and indeed, it is in accordance with United Nations purposes and principles as enshrined in the Charter.

Multilateralism

Madam President;

It is in facing these global challenges that multilateralism at all levels of response and especially through the United Nations and its institutions becomes essential to ensure peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies. It is undeniable fact that every sovereign state in the international system seeks to maximize its national interests and the wellbeing of its citizens. However, acting alone and in isolation minimizes the potential for realizing desired optimal results for nations acting in isolation. Globalization and the intricate web relations that have subsequently emerged globally renders a multilateral approach to issues of national, regional and international concern are essential and unavoidable.

Unfortunately, the world is, in recent times witnessing multilateral institutions and principles being put to test. For example, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which has been the pillar and yardstick of rule based fair global trading system is being undermined. Climate change and global warming which is already wrecking havoc to lives and property in all regions regardless of national borders can only be addressed effectively through multilateral approaches. Above all, it was the post Second World War multilateral edifice and institutions which have given us the peace we witness today albeit its shortcomings. We should be seeking to improve the shortcomings in the multilateral system we have created for ourselves for a better world rather than walking away from it.

Madam President;

Tanzania is unreservedly committed to the multilateralism in pursuit of its national interests. It is also through unmitigated multilateralism, that we will be

able to address critical global challenges such as terrorism, extremism, radicalism, climate change, restrictive trade policies, trafficking in persons, drug abuse, pandemic diseases, absolute poverty, immigration dynamics and weapons of mass destruction, just to mention a few. We are encouraged by the united chorus from this General Assembly in the defence of multilateralism and in defence of the purposes and principles of the United Nations which bind all its members.

Diplomatic Means to Resolve Conflicts

Madam President;

We have seen diplomatic engagement working successfully to bring adversaries to a roundtable to address their differences peacefully. Tanzania wishes to underscore the continuous use of diplomatic means and roundtable dialogue to address conflicts between and among nations. It is in this regard, as a peaceful and stable country, Tanzania has assisted and witnessed the value of brokering peace. Tanzania welcomes the recent talks between the US and North Korea on the Korean Nuclear Deal which paved the way for a recent signing of an agreement between North Korea and Republic of Korea. We hope this deal and others that have followed the same pattern will yield the anticipated positive outcomes sooner than late including the long outstanding humanitarian issues in the Korean Peninsula. These are some of good examples of successful outcomes following the diplomatic engagements around the world.

All these efforts have confirmed the value of dialogue in resolving and preventing conflicts.

UN Reforms

Madam President;

Reforms are necessary for continuity and change. For the past few decades, this very Assembly has continuously been discussing reforms of the United Nations and its institutions to effectively respond to the current global economic, political, social and security dynamics. This is the way to make our Organisation alive and relevant. Currently, the reforms are focusing on the United Nations development system, management and peace and security. My delegation strongly believes that the reforms will be objective and balanced.

Tanzania supports the reforms of the United Nations, especially the Security Council and reiterates the position of Africa as contained in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration of which we abide with. In addition, Tanzania urges the international community to make the process transparent, inclusive and democratic. All countries, poor and rich must have equal participation and their voices and positions must be heard and taken seriously. After many years of almost stalemated negotiations on the Security Council Reforms, it is necessary to move the process forward but in a manner that will preserve the interests and positions of all parties concerned in a transparent consultative manner.

Madam President;

We ought to remind ourselves that the credibility of the United Nations rests on a well-represented and responsive Security Council. The Council is what it is today, and the reforms are not advancing well because of the veto. If we are to make meaningful reforms, we should first of all and foremost be bold enough to decide on the future use of the veto. In this respect, my delegation wishes to stress that issues relating to the veto, expansion of membership and categories should be addressed as a package and not in isolation.

Addressing Poverty

Madam President;

Over the years and with support of the international community and development partners, Tanzania has successfully implemented various national development plans which have significantly contributed to the reduction of poverty. Furthermore, we are proud to have incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our national development agenda in order to accelerate economic growth and eradicate poverty.

Drawing experiences from MDGs, it is apparent that implementation of the SDGs requires adequate, sustainable and predictable funding especially to least developed countries. Thus, mobilisation of long-term innovative public and private finance is key to the realisation of the goals.

Tanzania has embarked on systematic legal and administrative reforms which have been constraining resource mobilization and accountability. The Government has embarked on relentless fight against corruption and public service incompetence in order to increase accountability and transparency. The

Government has undertaken stringent measures to fight drug and human trafficking, illicit trade in ivory and violent extremism. As expected, these measures have generated determined resistance from vested economic and criminal elements. This has necessitated the Government to take appropriate countermeasures which have sometimes been misunderstood as restrictive. Tanzania will continue to respect its constitution, the rule of Law and enshrined freedom.

Despite the ongoing efforts on domestic resource mobilization, developing countries continue to experience a global systemic issue on tax regime and illicit financial flows which contributes to capital flight and deny these countries of their rightful income. We call upon the international community to double the efforts in dealing with these systemic issues through, among other things, establishing an intergovernmental tax body under the United Nations to address tax competition and tax avoidance. This will in turn put at disposal more resources to developing countries to implement the SDGs.

Peace Keeping Operations

Madam President;

Tanzania is among the top troop contributing countries to the UN peacekeeping missions, and that we have contributed to the restoration of global peace and stability. The number of our troops serving in different missions currently stands at 2,687 peacekeepers.

Despite these achievements, the participation of Tanzania in peacekeeping operations has met some challenges including attacks and killings of our peace keepers. The December 2017 attack is the worst in the last 25 years of peacekeeping history. We thank the UNSG and all member states that extended condolences to Tanzania and the families, friends and relatives of the demised. Our pain was relieved by many of you who stood with Tanzania during that difficult moment. May the souls of the departed rest in eternal peace. Amen!

In view of support received from the United Nations, we commend the Secretary General for promptly forming a Special Investigation Team which established the causes of the attack and actions to be taken to prevent such hostile and cowardly incidences in the future. We are also gratified that the recommendations of the investigation report will feature in the Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations which Tanzania supports. Tanzania looks forward to the implementation of the recommendations.

Situation of Refugees

Madam President;

I wish to remind this august assembly of the historical role played by Tanzania in hosting and providing sanctuary to refugees for decades from Central and Southern Africa. We have done that out of humanity and in line with the internationally agreed principles of admitting asylum seekers and protecting refugees. Currently, we are hosting more than 330,000 refugees, mainly from Burundi and DRC. Over the years, and decades of hosting refugees, Tanzania has provided local integration as a durable solution to many refugees than any other country in the world in excess of 150,000 refugees.

Apart from providing sanctuary to refugees, we have also been involved in resolving regional conflicts in the great lakes region that have the potential to increase refugee influxes. In addition, Tanzania has also assisted the voluntary repatriation of more than 46,000 Burundian refugees as of September 2018. The repatriation exercise was conducted transparently and inclusively in collaboration with the Burundian authorities, UNHCR and other relevant development partners. Some misguided Burundi exiles have criticised the exercise as involuntary when actually there has been bottlenecks and constraints in implementing the Tripartite Agreement due to lack of resources and mixed progress in the political and security situation in Burundi.

It is in this regard, Tanzania requests the international community to facilitate and support the on-going voluntary repatriation of the remaining Burundian refugees. It is equally important to present a realistic assessment of the evolving political and security situation in Burundi to permit the refugees to make informed and objective decision on return to various parts of the country.

Political Situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Madam President;

The people of DRC continue to face challenges of peace, security and stability. The country has continuously been destabilized by warring factions and war lords that have created havoc leading to political instability in some parts of the country. This situation has not only denied DRC the opportunity to develop its country and people, but has also undermined and threatened regional peace and security. However, the current developments in resolving that impasse is very refreshing taking into account the government's commitment to hold the long-awaited

general elections later this year. The stability in DRC does not only contribute to address the refugee problem, but also accelerates regional trade, investment, and economic prosperity opportunities.

In this regard, Tanzania encourages the international community to extend both logistical and financial support to DRC so that it can successfully complete the necessary preparations for, and holding of, the elections. To this end, it is necessary to continue with the UN stabilization mission under MONUSCO and FIB in the eastern part of the country until elections are concluded.

US Embargoes on Cuba

Madam President;

In 2015, many world leaders who gathered here welcomed the historic and momentous decision taken by the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba to restore diplomatic relations. To most of us, it was the beginning of a harmonious co-existence with high hopes and expectations. However, with time, we feel that minimum efforts have been made to meet such hopes and expectations by ultimately lifting the embargoes which have condemned the people of Cuba for many years. We hope that, through the power of reason and the very diplomatic means that led to the reestablishment of their ties, there will be the total removal of those embargoes against Cuba, and that a new dawn of cooperation will follow.

Non-Self-Governing Territories

Western Sahara

Madam President;

The issue of self-determination for Western Sahara has entered a new direction with Morocco re-joining the African Union, where it is a member of the Peace and Security Council. There is a renewed opportunity for the United Nations and the UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to work with the newly established AU Troika Mechanism of the African Union to address the issue of Western Sahara. Tanzania supports that initiative.

The Question of Palestine

Madam President;

Tanzania reiterates its position in resolving the conflict between Israel and Palestine by supporting the two-state solution. We understand that Palestine has the right to enjoy its independence and peace as is Israel in accordance with the United Nations Charter. It is our belief that it is within the creative and resourceful ability of Israel and the determination of the Palestinian people to reach a peaceful solution that will permit Israel and Palestine to co-exist in peace and security.

Conclusion

Madam President;

As I conclude, I reiterate Tanzania's commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations and to multilateralism. Tanzania stands ready all the time to participate constructively in the search for peaceful solutions to conflicts and contributing to the UN mandates for conflict prevention and peacekeeping. Above all, we look to this Organization to continue championing the implementation for the sustainable development goals to support Tanzania's own efforts to achieve sustainable development goals as it heads to a middle income status through industrialization.

May God bless us all; and God bless the United Nations

I thank you for your kind attention.