



# CAMEROON



64th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Mr President,  
Heads of State and Delegation,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to begin by extending my congratulations to Mr Ali Treki on his election to the Presidency of this Sixty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly and wishing him every success during his term of office.

Permit me also to pay tribute to Mr Ban-Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for working untiringly and with remarkable devotion at the helm of our Organization.

As each year, we are required during this session to look at the state of the world, discuss together current problems and recommend appropriate solutions to them.

In this regard, as we know, the International Community is still reeling under the shock of a global financial and economic crisis which has spared no country.

Through the extraordinary mobilization that has followed the crisis, one can fathom its scope and extent as well as the serious threat that it poses to the stability of the global economy.

We should welcome this strong mobilization led by the major industrialized countries. It was prompt, resolute and substantial. Without any doubt, it has fully demonstrated the responsiveness of the International Community when it is driven and underpinned by true political will.

This is certainly a good example of solidarity, international solidarity as we like to have it and as we would have also loved to see manifested in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, in our common desire to narrow the gap between North and South, in our daily struggle against poverty, hunger and the pandemics.

In other words, if we have been able to mobilize so strongly to contain the effects of the financial crisis, we can also do so to cope with the other challenges facing us, notably poverty and

underdevelopment which remain the plight of so many people throughout the world.

For, while the crisis has spared no continent, there is no doubt that its effects vary according to country, region and level of development.

Today, Africa, in particular, which had no hand in this crisis, is paradoxically among its worst affected victims.

Among its most disturbing effects are:

- a decline in capital transfers to our countries;
- a drastic drop in the prices of our products,
- a marked decline in investment;
- worsening budget deficits;
- an economic slowdown;

all of which, amongst others, also have severe social consequences, such as increased unemployment.

Furthermore, there is good reason to fear that if the crisis were to persist, this would contribute to increased indebtedness of developing countries.

We now find ourselves confronted with new difficulties when we have barely come out of many years of economic recovery efforts under rigorous structural adjustment programmes implemented with determination by our States, in collaboration with international financial institutions.

Our efforts and our sacrifices have not been in vain, and we believe that our gains, which are the fruit of the meritorious efforts of our people, must absolutely be preserved and supported.

We therefore believe that in the face of adverse effects of the crisis, we must strive together to find a global, coordinated and effective response for the benefit of the weakest economies.

Such response, in our opinion, should consist in providing substantial financial resources, without, as much as possible, conditionalities, to be used to cushion or even offset the consequences of a crisis that we could not avert.

In the absence of such support, our developing countries run the risk of witnessing the weakening of their economies and the disappearance of signs of revival which they could reasonably expect.

It is obvious that development and improving living conditions, as well as peace and stability in our countries all hinge on it. This also holds true for international peace and security, inasmuch as the numerous problems confronting the world today, be it illegal immigration or all sorts of trafficking, for example, are partly a result of inadequate cooperation and solidarity. This calls for greater equity in international relations.

In this connection, I do hail the good decision taken at the G20 Summit in London last April urging the IMF to grant more and softer loans to the weakest economies with lighter conditionalities.

Incidentally, it is within this context that my country, Cameroon, received substantial financial support from the IMF under the exogenous shocks facility.

I am pleased and I would like to seize this opportunity to thank International Monetary Fund officials. This support which was timely will strengthen the anticyclical measures that we adopted at the national and sub-regional levels while being fully aware that foreign aid is merely a supplement which should not replace our own efforts.

Accordingly, in Cameroon, we have strengthened the productive sectors and carried out actions to reduce the prices of basic commodities and improve the business climate.

In the sub-region, Member Countries of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community have agreed to adopt tax incentives and set up a fund to support the sectors most affected by the crisis.

This means that while accepting assistance from the International Community, we are aware that it can bear fruit only if based on stringent management and good governance centred on the primacy of public interest.

By the way, it is in this regard that a few years back I recommended from this rostrum the establishment within the United Nations of a Global Ethics Committee for, it is a combination of moral flaws and serious ethical deviations that is at the root of the current global financial crisis.

We do hope that in the nearest future, we will surmount this crisis through collective awareness and mobilization.

However, besides the financial and economic crisis, we are equally concerned about other important stakes:

- the food crisis is still rife in many developing countries;
- the poverty reduction struggle is far from being won;
- global peace and security are still threatened worldwide, notably in Africa;
- climate change is each day becoming increasingly worrisome, with visible consequences in every country.

Regarding climate change in particular, Africa, like the other continents, is hard hit, despite its low level of greenhouse gas emissions.

Global warming, which is its most significant feature, affects many socioeconomic sectors, including energy, health, agriculture, livestock production and ecosystems, as well as rapid desertification.

In this regard, the spectacular drying up of Lake Chad whose size has gone from 26 000 km<sup>2</sup> in the 1960s to 1 500 km<sup>2</sup> today, clearly requires the collective action of Central African States, which, in our opinion, needs strong support from the International Community.

One thing is certain: African countries are, individually and collectively, pulling their full weight in actions carried out at the national, sub-regional and global levels to provide concrete solutions to the challenge of climate change.

Such participation is significant. In Cameroon, it has taken the form of numerous actions including the establishment of a national environmental management plan, and the adoption at the sub-regional level of a convergence plan for the sustainable management of the Congo Basin forest which, we are all aware, is the world's second largest forest block.

The implementation of all these measures is very costly, especially in terms of acquiring adapted technologies and requires our people to accept to make huge sacrifices.

Furthermore, without denying the fact that the fate and future of the planet is everyone's business, it seems legitimate, in my opinion, to ask that the peoples of Africa be duly compensated by the International Community for their efforts and sacrifices. In this regard, we do hope that the Copenhagen Climate Conference which is scheduled for December will provide satisfactory answers to the specific case of Africa.

Regarding world peace and security, we continue to deplore the persistence of numerous conflicts or hotbeds of tension, despite significant progress made towards a return to calm.

I am referring to the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in Darfur and in Somalia, among others.

Cameroon is playing an active role, including the dispatch of Cameroonian contingents, in a bid to find lasting solutions to these conflicts.

In this respect, I wish to hail the action of the United Nations which is making tireless efforts to stabilize these situations. However, the UN requires more appropriate human, financial and material resources for greater efficiency.

Furthermore, the UN should be able to reflect the common will of all its members, big and small to ensure its efficiency and credibility.

It must very clearly assert and further strengthen its role as the crucible par excellence of multilateralism, that is a forum for the exchange of ideas, solidarity, equity, and equality where all voices

and opinions of developed and developing countries are expressed and taken into account.

These values go hand in hand with the dialogue of civilizations proposed for consideration during this session.

Such dialogue should not ignore differences, but rather promote diversity so as to foster knowledge and mutual understanding among peoples.

From this perspective, the dialogue of civilizations or cultures advocates tolerance and mutual respect and rejects all forms of fanaticism which threaten international peace and security.

Such is the dual role that the UN, which is an experimental ground for multilateralism and a crucible of the dialogue of civilizations, should assume if it must embody the noblest and deepest aspirations of humanity and seek global and relevant solutions to our peoples' expectations.

The question is how can the UN achieve this if it does not adapt to the current trends and changes in international relations?

Such is the purpose of the recommendations we have been making for the reform of the Security Council, the revitalization of the United Nations General Assembly and increasing the means of action of the Secretary-General of the Organization.

We therefore need to fast-track the overhaul of an Organization which, by its universal nature, symbolizes our common destiny and is our common abode.

This is because, the hopes and trust of peoples will remain centered only on a UN that is new, more democratic, more credible and more efficient.

**Thank you for your attention.**