



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS

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STATEMENT
BY

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At the 64th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations

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- His Excellency Dr Ali Treki, President of the United Nations General Assembly;
- Excellencies;
- Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

This Session of the United Nations General Assembly offers further opportunity to reflect on how best to reconcile what at times, mistakenly appears to be irreconcilable – socioeconomic development and a healthy environment.

Leaders, experts and citizens world over ask: “How can we grow our economies and spread prosperity to more of the world’s citizens, and not degrade our oceans, rivers, and the air we breathe?”

But these are also times of extraordinary scientific, technological and business innovations that can help address these challenges – if we have the courage to put into proper perspective and indeed harmonise our national, regional, and global priorities.

History is replete with illustrations of how nations, immersed in crises, changed the underlying assumptions by which they acted, and created new institutions and tools to solve problems, and emerged from the process as stronger societies.

While these innovations are always different, the challenges to surmount them are always the same: forging a shared vision; increasing social capital required to enhance predictable, trustful relations between peoples; receptivity to doing things in new ways; and adopting explicit moral purpose to achieve common goals.

We have an exceptional opportunity to address our environmental challenges, improve our economies, and reform our global multilateral institutions for better global governance – at the same time.

The G-20 for example is now playing a crucial role in restoring global economic stability; but should we not even broaden the base further to include many nations that are most vulnerable to the decisions of the few?

All nations should be part of these important discussions, because they have valuable contributions to make.

This is the time to embrace “true multilateralism”.

We in developing nations appreciate the corrective measures by the G8 and G20 to accelerate global economic recovery – but it is evident that most of their proposals fall short of the concrete steps needed to address challenges that are specific to Low Income Countries.

Multilateralism has always been the key tenet in forging a fairer international community – based on equitable global governance; the United Nations itself is based on this very sound and tested principle and practice.

The rise of worldwide networks of trade, industry, prosperity, and social values, together with creation of multilateral institutions to guide and harmonize these processes, have no doubt contributed to a fairer and improved global decision-making system – this is what needs to be rendered more inclusive.

Improving global governance has also to address international justice. International justice should be fair to all – rich and poor; strong or weak. We are pleased to note that the sixty third session of the United Nations General Assembly undertook to comprehensively examine the issue of universal jurisdiction.

We look forward to the resolutions on this matter in the current session of the General Assembly. Regarding socioeconomic challenges in our East African Community region, we are making progress in key areas – for instance, preparing to inaugurate in January 2010 the East African Common Market to facilitate greater trade, investment and free movement of almost 130 million people. We believe that there is no better mitigation strategy to economic difficulties than building larger regional markets that bring improved productivity, which increases purchasing power, and in turn, strengthens our societies.

Regarding the global environmental challenge, this United Nations General Assembly session provides an important platform for preparing for the Copenhagen Climate Change Summit. Every nation should have co-equal status and be considered “A Concerned Nation” at the forthcoming summit. This implies that each nation has both rights *and obligations*, and should be open to “burden sharing,” according to their ability to do so.

This is the time to address in a timely fashion such key issues as how much *the industrialized countries* are to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases; how much are *developing countries* to limit

the growth of emissions; and how to finance and support strategies to conserve energy, mitigate risk, and build green technologies that counteract the impact of climate change in the developing world.

We have been making a modest but proportionate contribution in Rwanda, by among other things, hosting African preparatory meetings for the Copenhagen Summit – to encourage the *strong and essential African voice* at this critical meeting.

We have also been actively implementing national environmental policies for reforestation, terracing, and the rehabilitation of wetlands that supply lake and river systems in our country – to name a few – with good results.

On the matter of peace and security: the world faces a number of regional threats.

The Great Lakes Region has its share of peace and security problems, but we continue to make significant progress in fundamentally addressing this question. The leaders of this region recognize that most crucially, homegrown solutions, beginning with a joint regional effort, can bring about sustainable peace. It is in this context that we, together with our colleagues and neighbors in the Democratic Republic of Congo, are dealing with the root cause of instability in our area –the negative forces that have been a menace since 1994.

If history teaches us anything, it is that we cannot apply same strategies for different problems and expect satisfactory outcomes all the time —we have to think differently on the fundamental questions, including the urgent imperatives of:

- Strengthening the future of all nations by fostering economic growth and development whilst investing in the environment – this should be *our moral purpose*;
- Improving peace and stability of all regions by learning from, and supporting, legitimate regional actors *and*;
- Engaging and embracing *the majority world* into multilateralism of decision-making, trade, and prosperity –these should be *our shared vision*.

Future generations will know, then, how leaders of nations in the year 2009-- immersed in crises, focused on the most difficult challenges, including global economic crisis, climate change and greater peace and security; and acted with resolve.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION