

**Mr. President,
Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,
Your Excellency Mr. Ban Ki Moon, Secretary General of the
United Nations,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate you for your well deserved election to the Office of President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly. Your career as a leader and diplomat speaks for itself. I assure you of my delegation's support during your tenure of office. I should also commend your predecessor, His Excellency, Dr. Abdussalam Ali Treki for a job well done.

Mr. President,

Your choice of theme for this session of the General Assembly, namely, **“reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance”** is not only apt but inspired!

The founding of the United Nations was propelled by the determination to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. It was driven by the desire to reaffirm faith in fundamental Human Rights, the rule of law, and not least, to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

For the past 65 years, this Assembly of Nations has been converging here every year in pursuit of the lofty ideals of the United Nations. Yet for 65 years the achievement of these ideals has eluded us.

Unilateralism and war remain the order of the day. Disrespect of International Law, vast economic inequities, injustice and suppression of basic freedoms are the challenges we face today, just as we did 65 years ago. In addition, we have climate change, financial and economic crises, terrorism and religious intolerance to contend with. Needless to mention,

these challenges have heightened the threat to world stability, international peace and security.

Let the events of the first decade of this millennium be a lesson for all of us to learn and treasure. We have learned a lesson in the futility of unilateralism, intolerance and war; that selfishness in world relations is suicidal . We have learned a lesson in the value of collective decision-making and inclusive development, if our planet and its inhabitants are to survive. These lessons say to us that mankind must turn away from the path of self-destruction. The route to peace and stability is clear to all of us, yet we continue to lose ourselves in the wilderness of instability and poverty, because we are blinded by ulterior motives.

If we value the lessons of the past decade, we must accept that war is brutal, destructive and unacceptable. The founding fathers of the United Nations were right when they affirmed the centrality of the United Nations in global decision-making and governance.

We must admit that great injustices are being committed during our times and that Human Rights are being trampled upon as we stand by silently.

In this regard, for decades now, the people of Western Sahara, Cuba and Palestine have been calling to this august body for help to reverse the injustices, humiliation and atrocities that are being visited upon them by Colonialism, unilateral economic blockades, and brutal occupation. Even today, the people of these territories are still calling. They are calling to you. Will you listen and respond, or will you just look or walk away? Surely, we cannot condone injustice and yet hope for peace. Sustainable peace can only be based on justice and protection of basic freedoms for all.

By the same token, Zimbabwe must be freed from unilateral sanctions, as her people work together under the unity government to determine their own future under the leadership of their choice. In the same vein,

external interests must not be allowed to take precedence over the desire of the people of Madagascar for democracy and stability in their country. Somalia is a festering wound on the African continent. Let us rise to the appeal that was made by the President of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia to this Assembly a few days ago. He urged us to assist the people of Somalia to join the international movement for the achievement of peace, the rule of law, and the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. President,

Planet Earth is the only world on which we must all live in shared prosperity and peace. In the wake of the devastating effects of climate change, we all converged in Copenhagen with optimism, but left with mixed feelings, following lack of international consensus and the necessary political will. Meantime, climate change continues to wreak havoc, particularly in those vulnerable developing countries that do not have the means for adaptation and mitigation of the impacts of global warming. Lesotho signed the Copenhagen Accord because we believed that it represented a step forward, even though it did not fully satisfy our aspirations. It is our hope that, the forthcoming Conference in Cancun, Mexico, will achieve international consensus, leading to a legally binding regime on the management of climate change.

The just-ended High-Level Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals has confirmed to us that the recent economic and financial downturn has disrupted our strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Despite this, we appeal to our Development Partners to fulfill their commitments on Official Development Assistance (ODA) to help accelerate our progress to the achievement of the MDGs.

Mr. President,

The world is still grappling with terrorism. For as long as this menace exists, there shall never be peace on earth. Terrorism knows no boundaries, and does not respect human life. There is neither a country nor an individual who can claim immunity from terrorism. Terrorist groups are benefiting from globalisation by decentralizing their operations, building new partnerships with armed groups, and using advanced technology to further their course. This menace can be eradicated only by seriously addressing the root causes, and NOT the symptoms of terrorism.

Religious intolerance is closely related to terrorism. We must acknowledge that religious tolerance is a pre-requisite to international peace and security; that diversity of cultures and religions must be respected and tolerated, as it represents the strength and collective heritage of mankind. Cultivation of the culture of religious tolerance must be inscribed high on the agenda of the international community.

Mr. President,

One of the fundamental conditions for maintaining international peace and security is our commitment to the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. More than six decades after the formation of the UN, disarmament sadly remains a major challenge facing the international community. Today we see a steadily growing list of de-facto Nuclear Weapons States. Proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction must stop. So must the development of new generations of nuclear weapons by nuclear capable states. We must strive for a nuclear weapons free world. It is the responsibility of these states to stop threatening use of nuclear weapons as an option in the pursuit of their foreign policy interests. Lesotho will continue to join hands with all peace-loving Nations to support international disarmament and non-proliferation regimes.

While the international community has registered some successes in consolidating peace in some parts of the world, a significantly large number of conflicts still remain unresolved. Some of these conflicts are in Africa. As African Leaders we consciously declared 2010 as the year of Peace and Security in Africa. We resolved to find African solutions to African problems. However, we have acknowledged our shortcomings in terms of capacity in peace-keeping and peace-building. Consequently, we look up to the international community to complement our efforts and resources in this regard. Conflict- affected countries must also have the necessary political will to accommodate and facilitate legitimate external intervention that is intended to resolve conflicts. At the same time, they must not abandon their primary responsibility as governments to protect all their citizens.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, it is my considered view that, all these challenges can be overcome, if we accept that the UN is a place where a better and secure life for humanity must be championed. But, its structures should be reformed to fulfill this noble mandate efficiently. Multilateral diplomacy should supplant the traditional unilateral path in the resolution of disputes. The UN must not be held hostage to the desires of any single country or group of states. Its actions should reflect as wide a consensus of Member States as possible. Let us continue to re-affirm the central role of the United Nations in global governance. Let us remember that might can never be right, and can never defeat collective resolve. It is only then, that collectively we shall be able to promote progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

I THANK YOU