



Republic of Malawi

“AFRICA OF THE NEW BEGINNING”

STATEMENT BY

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AND
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TO THE

**SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**NEW YORK
23RD SEPTEMBER, 2010**

(Check against delivery)

Mr. President
Secretary General
Excellencies
Heads of Delegations

I am delighted to address the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly as Chairman of the African Union for 2010.

I offer my personal congratulations and that of the African Union to you Mr. President on your election as President of the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I assure you of Africa's support in your work.

I pay tribute to His Excellency Dr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, President of the 64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly for his leadership during his tenure of office.

I also commend our Secretary General, His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, for his exemplary leadership of our organization and the excellent manner in which he continues to discharge his responsibilities. Africa is particularly grateful for his continued support of Africa's development agenda.

Mr. President

I am happy to say that Africa welcomes the theme for the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly that reaffirms the Central Role of the United Nations in Global Governance. African leaders believe that the United Nations, with its universal membership, is well placed to build political consensus for global governance. They hold the view that the United Nations has the potential to bring about solutions to common governance problems that our global village continues to encounter, such as managing diversity, combating terrorism and conflicts.

I believe this time, more than ever before, the United Nations needs to strengthen its institutions to enable it to promote peace and stability and facilitate balanced growth and prosperity between developed and developing countries.

Africa also wishes to remind the United Nations to not lose sight of its commitment to fight global poverty. Poverty reduction must remain the central focus of the United Nations.

Mr. President

As we reflect on this year's theme: **The Central Role of the United Nations in Global Governance**, I am fully aware that the Africa the world hears about is that of incessant calamities, and natural disasters.

International media reports on the Africa of extreme poverty, widespread endemic diseases and human suffering. They constantly portray the Africa of civil wars, genocide, terrorism and piracy; they glorify the Africa of underdevelopment and hopelessness.

But we do not hear in such media, about the success stories by a number of African governments. We do not hear about successes in participatory democracy and good governance. We do not hear about peaceful multiparty general elections. We do not hear about high rates of macroeconomic growth in some African countries. We do not hear of successful food security in some of them.

This is why I now want to present you another Africa. This is the Africa of new hopes and new possibilities; Africa of industrial, mineral, and agro-processing opportunities; Africa with new job creation prospects; and Africa that can produce enough food to feed its people.

Yes. This is the Africa I want you to know. This is the Africa of the New Beginning.

I want the world to know that we the African leaders have a clear vision of a new Africa free of hunger, disease and poverty. We have the vision of a new Africa that is prosperous and full of hope. We have the vision of African Nations determined to contribute more to the global economic prosperity, peace and stability.

I want to inform the world that the African Union leaders have decided to unlock Africa's combined huge natural resources and human capital to establish new industries that create new wealth for our people.

This is why this year I have chosen to address this august assembly on the subject: "**Africa of the New Beginning**". I want the United Nations to share our belief that Africa is not a poor continent; rather it is its people that are poor.

This year I have come to inform this world body that Africa has decided to shift from "Afro-pessimism" to "Afro-optimism". We are going to make Africa better.

Mr. President

Now, turning to global issues, I want to say that the world today faces the challenge of producing enough food to feed over 9 billion people living on this earth. This is against the backdrop of rising food prices, global warming, climate change and environmental degradation.

I am pleased to inform this world body that African leaders fully recognize these problems and have unanimously agreed to institute new measures to ensure that "five years from now, Africa will be able to produce enough food to feed its people". They have also decided that five years from now, no child in Africa should die of hunger or malnutrition.

In order to meet these targets, the African Union decided to turn the continent into an "African Food Basket" whose main aim is to encourage allocation of increased budgetary resources and private sector investment in agriculture and food production.

For this to happen, African leaders have agreed to redesign their policy interventions to focus on three priority areas, namely, agriculture and food security, transport and energy development and climate change. It is envisaged that effective transport structures and adequate energy supply will enhance agricultural production and food processing, and will

improve human mobility and marketing of food and agricultural products from surplus to deficit countries across the African continent.

The African Food basket concept envisages full cooperation between African and G8 Governments, the United Nations, the Food and Agricultural Organization, the World Bank, the European Union and other multilateral institutions.

Mr. President

I now want to briefly raise some issues of major concern to Africa. These are the adverse effects of climate change, fragile peace and security, terrorism and piracy, maternal, infant and child mortality, and slow reforms of the United Nations.

African leaders recognize that climate change and environmental degradation are among the most serious global challenges that affect African countries negatively. All countries in the world share the adverse effects of climate change. All countries in the world are in varying degrees experiencing the adverse impacts of climate change such as severe cyclones and hurricanes, rising sea levels and water salination, prolonged severe droughts and overall global warming.

There is enough evidence to show that most countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America are the least able and equipped to cope with these challenges. The global nature of climate change, therefore calls for an effective, immediate and appropriate international response. We need to act and act now.

The international community has acknowledged that climate change is a real threat to humanity. And yet the performance of the major players at the Copenhagen Conference disappointed Africa and other developing nations by their intransigency.

The leaders of Africa therefore would like to see that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Kyoto Protocol are urgently implemented as essential interventions to address climate change. These conventions spell out in detail what is to be done to mitigate climate change.

Therefore on behalf of Africa, I call for immediate implementation of these decisions in order to avert impending human catastrophe.

Mr. President

I am glad to note that maternal, infant and child health and welfare are among the underlying issues in this year's General Assembly's theme. This calls for concerted actions for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

I am pleased to say that the African Union has reaffirmed its commitments towards the reduction of maternal, infant and child mortality in Africa. To that end, African governments have undertaken to launch the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMA) to run for four (4) years.

We also agreed to call on the Global Fund for Fight Against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, to create a new window to fund Maternal, New born and Child health.

Let me, therefore, take advantage of the General Assembly to appeal on behalf of Africa to our development partners/donors to replenish the Global Fund during next month's meeting and to increase resources towards Maternal, New born and Child Health.

Mr. President

Another issue of global governance that is of major concern to Africa is the lack of movement in negotiations on international trade under the Doha Round Multilateral Trade negotiations. Members of the United Nations agree that trade is a conduit to development in every country. As such, we, in Africa appeal for an urgent conclusion of the Doha Round.

We in Africa believe that the conclusion of the Doha Round is essential to revive global trade and to aid in global economic recovery. Any outcome of the negotiations of the Doha Development Round must lead to clear benefits for farmers, producers, exporters and consumers in developing countries including Africa. Nations of the world must redouble our efforts to resolve all impediments to the successful outcome of the trade negotiations.

Mr. President

The advancement of women and gender equality continues to be the cornerstone for Africa of the new beginning. Women have and continue to play a decisive role in the global, continental and national agendas for democracy, transition and development.

I am happy to inform the General Assembly that African governments have intensified the fight against gender-based violence, sexual abuse, discrimination and human trafficking in women and girls. The ultimate objective is to have more coherent and meaningful interventions that will adequately increase the number of women in high decision making positions in the advancement of growth and development.

Mr. President

On peace and security, I wish to underscore that the African Union considers that without peace and security, democracy, good governance and development cannot be sustainable.

African countries have made significant progress in ensuring that peace and security prevails on the African continent. Several countries have conducted peaceful elections and there is growing tolerance and accommodation between the ruling and opposition parties in many countries. This is encouraging.

However, Africa has of late, witnessed the re-emergence of *coups d'état* and other unconstitutional changes of government. The African Union has taken a strong collective decision that these negative trends will not allow this to continue.

The African Union is also gravely concerned that Somalia has had no stable or functioning government for a long time. This continuing volatile situation is being compounded by rising

and organized piracy in the Indian Ocean. This is negatively affecting not only Somalia and her immediate neighbours but the entire African continent and the rest of the world.

I believe the situation calls for new approach and new intervention. More countries should be directly involved in finding a lasting solution to the Somalia crisis.

Mr. President

The situation in Sudan presents a special challenge to the African Union and to the United Nations. Although some progress has been achieved towards the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the African Union eagerly awaits the holding of the referendum in January 2011 and the post-referendum structure of relations in the Sudan.

One of the most immediate options in the Sudan is to consolidate the prevailing peace and stability in the country. The African countries are concerned that while efforts to secure lasting peace in Sudan are ongoing, the International Criminal Court seems to push for a "pound of flesh" by insisting on arresting President Omar Hassan El-Bashir. There is general consensus in Africa that this will negatively polarize the different positions of the stakeholders, thereby driving them away from a peaceful settlement.

The African Union therefore strongly appeals to the United Nations General Assembly to amend Article 16 of the Rome Statute to enable it to assume the powers of the Security Council to defer the case against President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir for one year to allow ongoing negotiations and dialogue to succeed.

I wish to express on behalf of the African Union, appreciation for the contribution of the United Nations to the promotion of peace, security and stability in African countries. The United Nations has performed well in many parts of Africa including the Democratic Republic of Congo, in Sudan, Chad and other West African countries.

These efforts are highly commendable in the search for solutions to the ongoing conflicts on the continent.

Mr. President

The sanctions against some members of the African Union and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) have caused great economic hardship especially to the poor and more vulnerable people in these countries. The African Union feels that the ideological justifications, if there ever were any, have outlived their time.

Sanctions are also inconsistent with the emerging dialogue for the reform of the United Nations. Sanctions are also inconsistent with the obligations of the members of the United Nations to "promote social progress and better standards of life" as promulgated in the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations.

The African Union therefore appeals for immediate lifting of sanctions against the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Republic of Cuba. We believe that lifting these sanctions will enable

ordinary poor Zimbabweans and Cubans to begin a life of new hope and new opportunity for prosperity.

On the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, the African Union supports the position taken by the Non-Aligned Movement calling for justice and equal treatment for all concerned nations.

Mr. President

With regard to the reforms of the United Nations and the Security Council, The African Union believes that for the organization to be effective in fulfilling its mandate as an honest broker there is need to implement the proposed reforms within the spirit of equity and fairness.

In this regard, I would like to reiterate the African Union's request for two permanent seats with full veto powers and five non-permanent seats.

The African Union should have the right to determine the selection of Africa's representative in the Security Council.

Once implemented, this will enable Africa to effectively participate in global governance that the United Nations is now propagating.

Mr. President
Secretary General
Excellencies

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Africa's strong belief that a reformed United Nations and its Specialized Agencies are likely to play a more effective role in global governance and in a more equitable global trading and financial system.

I believe that the United Nations in its new governance role should support the Africa of the new beginning. A stronger Africa industrially, economically and politically is a better trading partner for the G-8 and the rest of the world than a weaker one.

I also believe that the Africa of the new beginning with its combined vast mineral, agricultural and human resources will provide the "safety valve" for a boiling international monetary and financial system.

Think about these things.

I thank you.