



**MAURITIUS**

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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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PRIME MINISTER**

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*Please check against Delivery*



Mr President,  
 Excellencies,  
 Fellow Delegates,

The primary purpose of the United Nations is to maintain peace and security, as set out in the very first Article of its Charter. This remains the top priority of the international community and of the United Nations.

However, sixty-six years after the adoption of the Charter our definition of peace and security differs from what it was in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. Our concerns are today wider than just the suppression of aggression or similar breaches of peace. We are now equally concerned about the threats to peace and security resulting from factors other than armed aggression. Tensions exist, within nations and amongst nations, as a result of unequal access to resources, lack of food security or existential threats because of the inability to address climate change issues.

Insecurity also results from the absence of an adequate international machinery for the redress of grievances and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

I propose to deal with what could be four of the constitutive elements of present day security that the international community and the United Nations should address:

1. Economic Security
2. Environmental Security
3. Human Security; and
4. Legal Security.

#### 1. ECONOMIC SECURITY

Mr. President, when peoples and nations feel inextricably mired in poverty and face bleak prospects of development, they are insecure about their future. This economic insecurity may ultimately threaten global peace.

The current economic turmoil is deepening the despair of those who live in need and spread despondency even in relatively affluent countries. The world economy is yet to recover from the crisis of 2008.

Today, Europe and North America struggle with budget deficits, unsustainable debts and high unemployment. At the same time, the recent political turmoil across the Middle East could mean that oil and food prices would continue to rise.

As developed economies grapple with these serious challenges, the developing world finds itself negatively impacted by economic and financial crises resulting from failures in which it had no part.

Whilst the ability of established developed countries to deal with economic and financial problems is in question, the world is witnessing the rapid rise of a number of emerging economies.

As the economic center of gravity shifts eastwards and creates new opportunities we must ensure that the formidable global challenges do not create economic insecurity for those who feel left behind and lead to other threats to international security.

It is imperative that we manage these transformations judiciously and with pragmatism.

I must stress, in this context, the particular economic vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States. The economies of SIDS remain highly volatile because of their open economies, small economic size, narrow resource base, disadvantages in economies of scale, high export concentration, high dependency on imports with high vulnerability to energy and food price shocks.

We reiterate that SIDS need to be granted preferential treatment as part of a global strategy to ensure economic security. Regrettably, SIDS have been denied the formal recognition of their specific vulnerabilities that would entitle them to special consideration. My delegation supports the full implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action and the Mauritius Strategy on SIDS.

As there are increasing concerns over issues like employment, food security, climate change, access to water, it is a matter of regret that trade talks which could have given a boost to international trade and hence to economic security are stalled.

On a broader note, Mr President, I must say that talks on trade and other economic issues, to the extent that they take place at all, are held in sectoral and often restricted fora. Whilst the specialised nature of these negotiations or of the scope of matters being addressed by standard-setting organisations may require dedicated sectoral frameworks, it is imperative that the international community ensures that:-

1. these frameworks are legitimate ones with universal membership ; and
2. that the UN, as an apex body, has a holistic view of global economic, financial, trade and development issues.

Mr President, the United Nations played a significant role in the 70's, in shaping the conceptual framework for a new international economic order. The United Nations adopted a number of landmark resolutions which laid the normative foundation for a more equitable economic order. The United Nations still has a role to play in shaping the world economic order to ensure economic security, in accordance with its mandate under the Charter.

The United Nations is the only international organisation with the legitimacy and the universality required, but also with the responsibility to have an overview of global economic development.

In doing so, the United Nations will ensure policy coordination between sectoral fora, set the principles and guidelines for sector-specific negotiations and assume its ultimate responsibility for the economic security of all nations.

To reaffirm its responsibility with respect to economic security, the United Nations must not only undergo institutional reforms and reforms in its working methods but also re-balance its respective focus on political and economic issues.

In this context the Economic and Social Council must be given the prominence that it was intended to have as one of the main organs of the United Nations.

In assuming its responsibility with respect to economic security a reformed and revitalized United Nations will have to work more closely with regional cooperation institutions which are indeed the pillars of international cooperation.

Mr President,

The high food prices of 2007 and 2008 and the global economic crisis led millions of people into food insecurity and raised the total number of people going hungry to over one billion. Commodity prices remain high and the risk of repeated crises is real. With the projected increase in world population, to 9.1 billion by 2050, and the rising costs of production, there is a risk of persistent price volatility. This will be exacerbated by the effects of climate change. The international community must, therefore, seriously address the issue of food insecurity around the world.

Economic security also entails working towards a more inclusive national society, without discrimination, eliminating inequalities and fostering a wider participation of all sections of the community in national development and governance.

Mr President,

Three days ago we gathered to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. We welcome the progress that has been achieved in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance since 2001. We nonetheless recognize that in spite of these efforts, many people continue to be victims of these despicable practices.

Mr President,

We commend the United Nations for the success of the High-level Meeting on Youth and the adoption of the outcome document. Development and security will require the increased participation of youth in the formulation of strategies and policies.

In this same spirit, we welcome the establishment of UN Women and its overarching vision of a world in which societies are free of gender-based discrimination, where women and men have equal opportunities, respect and consideration. A more inclusive world where the intellectual and economic potential of women is fully realized will promote Economic Security.

In June, next year, world leaders will meet in Rio to renew their political commitment to sustainable development and hopefully to adopt concrete measures

that will contribute to greater Economic Security. But we will also have to consider why many past commitments have not been honoured before we can move ahead.

We look forward to the oceans receiving the attention that they deserve at Rio, as part of the broader economic agenda of the international community. Small Island States, in particular, rely on the international community to give due attention to the sustainability of the oceans in the context of Rio+20 and beyond. The sustainability of the oceans is crucial for the security and, in some cases, the very survival of many Small Island States.

## 2. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

Mr President,

Humanity as a whole is now increasingly concerned about its environmental security, as it has probably never been in its history. For some small island nations, this concern is, in fact, an existential one.

The United Nations has, over the last decades, brought to the fore the concept of sustainable development and the measures required to promote such development. The preparatory work underway prior to Rio+20 has highlighted the serious gaps we still face in this area. The disruptions resulting from climate change pose a threat to global security.

Mr. President, climate change is real ! Extreme weather phenomena, such as super storms, floods, droughts and heat waves, are already upon us. Climate change is affecting us in our daily life, and threatens the very survival of many small islands. Mauritius is already experiencing the adverse effects of climate change. Air temperature has risen by 0.6 to 1.1 degrees Celsius in different microclimates over the last decades. The sea level is rising at the rate of 1.2 millimeter per year in the Southwest Indian Ocean. Our annual rainfall has decreased by 8% compared to the 1950s. Extreme weather conditions, like flooding, are becoming more frequent. Summer days are warmer and winter days milder.

Without international cooperation and concerted action, the impact of climate change will be devastating for all our nations.

My delegation firmly believes that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

Small island nations are economically vulnerable. Their vulnerability is exacerbated by the dramatic consequences of climate change.

Small Island States rely on the international community for their security.

Mr President,

Mauritius is committed to the Green Economy concept. We recognize that it is not a one-size-fits-all concept. Countries need to reflect their own national realities and priorities in their implementation of the concept.

My Government has been pursuing a sustainable development strategy. The Maurice Ile Durable project, which we adopted in 2008, is taking shape. A whole range of measures have already been implemented. We propose to increase the share of renewable energy in power generation, from the present 18% to 35%, by 2025, by making more intensive use of bio-fuels, wave, solar and wind energy. I have, to this end, set up a full-fledged ministry responsible for sustainable development in May last year.

We are engaged in a national consultation process to formulate strategies and policies that have public support to protect the environment, deliver social justice and create a sustainable economy.

Water

Climate has and will continue to impact water cycle both directly and indirectly by affecting precipitation and evaporation cycles as well as water availability and its pattern of consumption. Many regions of the world are already experiencing reduced rainfall. As climate change intensifies and water scarcity becomes more acute, the threat of tensions amongst different users may increase. The international community must therefore work together to address this pressing issue.

Environmental Security must be one of the priority goals of the United Nations in promoting global security.

### 3. HUMAN SECURITY

Mr President,

In addition to climate change which poses an existential threat to some nations, people of the world continue to be concerned about their own security . I will mention four of these concerns:

#### A. Disarmament

Disarmament is a major component of the international security strategy. The threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is of universal concern.

Our failure to resolve the issue of disarmament continues to undermine global development and security.

A significant reduction in the production of conventional weapons and eventually a world free of nuclear weapons is a goal that will only be achieved over time and that will require patience and perseverance. As a matter of fact, the international

political environment is probably more conducive to the realisation of these goals now than it has ever been in the past.

#### B. TERRORISM

Terrorism continues to be a threat to security. Recent events have reminded us that acts of terrorism can be perpetrated by extremists from all sides of the political spectrum and that terrorism breeds equally in poor and rich countries.

The international community needs to follow up on the UN Global Strategy to combat terrorism and enhance international cooperation in this regard.

#### C. NARCO-TRAFFICKING

The World Drug Report 2011 again shows that drug trafficking and consumption remain significant. Narco-trafficking and drug money in organized crime and terrorist activities are a threat to stability and security at national and regional levels.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs, let us recommit our efforts to fight drug trafficking as part of the global strategy to ensure Human Security.

#### D. HIV/AIDS

We are thirty years into the fight against HIV/AIDS which is an ever present threat to Human Security. I am convinced that we have achieved more, in the ten years since the UNGA Special session on HIV/AIDS than we did in the previous two decades. It is heartening that the HIV/AIDS High Level Meeting, held in June, has renewed the political commitment of governments to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and to ensure that, by 2015, no child is born with HIV.

Mauritius fully adheres to the UN-AIDS vision of Uniting for Universal Access. The National AIDS Secretariat, which I set up in May 2007, pursues its work to achieve "zero new infection", "zero discrimination" and "zero AIDS-related death" in Mauritius.

### 4. LEGAL SECURITY

Mr President,

Article 2 of the UN Charter, provides that all members shall settle their disputes by peaceful means. Article 33 of the Charter spells out the means and ways of doing so. In the same spirit, the Charter provides, at its Chapter 14, for the establishment of the International Court of Justice.

However, Mr President, recourse to international adjudication for peaceful settlement of disputes between States has, historically, required the consent of the States concerned. In recent times, a number of bilateral or multilateral agreements have provided for the prior commitment of States to submit to arbitration or adjudication. We welcome this development.

Security requires appropriate legal framework for the redress of grievances or the settlement of disputes. The international community has yet to set up an adequate machinery for peaceful settlement of disputes that is available to all States.

The United Nations has decided to convene a High-level meeting during the 67th session on the Rule of Law. We welcome this decision but we want to stress that the debate on the rule of law must apply at both national and international levels. We would therefore look forward to the United Nations discussing the rule of law, as it applies to inter-State relations, as part of the forthcoming debates.

Allow me, Mr. President, to give as an example, the difficulties which my own country has experienced in resolving a dispute relating to decolonization with the former colonial power, the United Kingdom.

The Chagos Archipelago which is part of Mauritian territory, was excised from Mauritius prior to independence, in disregard of United Nations Resolutions 1514 and 2066 and the principles of international law, and declared as the so-called British Indian Ocean Territory. The United Kingdom has failed to engage in any meaningful discussions, with us on this matter.

When the Government of Mauritius consequently announced, in 2004, that it would refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice, the United Kingdom immediately amended its declaration, under Article 36 of the ICJ Statute, to oust the jurisdiction of the Court with respect to certain disputes with a member or former member of the Commonwealth.

This illustrates the kind of difficulties which a State may have in settling a claim under international law. The States involved in the dispute may refuse to negotiate in good faith and seek to ensure that no international tribunal can determine the law applicable to the dispute.

We call on the United Nations to keep under review the whole issue of settlement of disputes, including by judicial means, and to set standards of conduct for all States with respect to negotiation, conciliation, mediation or other forms of non-judicial and peaceful settlement of disputes or alternatively submission of the dispute to adjudication.

In this context, Mauritius is particularly pleased to welcome the decision of the President of the General Assembly to adopt, as the theme for the current session of the General Assembly, the Role of Mediation in Settling International Disputes. We assure you of our full support in advancing this cause.

Greater legal security also requires better global governance. In this respect the United Nations must lead by example. The UN must recognise that the world has changed since 1945. Current efforts to adopt reforms in relation to the Security Council, the revitalization of the General Assembly and the working methods of our Organisation have to be given the sincere and strong support that is required.

My delegation continues to believe that comprehensive reform of the Security Council should include reform in the membership of both the permanent and non-permanent categories. Africa should no longer be deprived of its right to permanent representation in the Council. My delegation fully supports the African common position enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

We believe equally that Latin America also fully deserves permanent representation in the Council.

Mauritius further reiterates its support to India's rightful aspiration to a permanent seat in a reformed Security Council.

Mr President,

We also look forward to a more all-inclusive UN system which can effectively address issues of international security with the admission of Palestine as a member State. The United Nations and the international community have a duty to restore to the Palestinian people their dignity and their right to statehood and security. Mauritius supports the application for full membership of the United Nations, submitted to the Secretary General yesterday by the President of the State of Palestine and the legitimate aspiration of the Palestinian people to take their rightful place in the international comity of nations. We welcome the statement by President Abbas that Palestine extends its hands to the Israeli Government and the Israeli people for peacemaking and for building cooperative relations between the States of Palestine and Israel.

We are also pleased to welcome the emergence of South Sudan as an independent and sovereign State and its admission to the United Nations.

Mr President, before I conclude, I wish to say a few words about matters of interest to our region.

#### A. PIRACY

As a coastal State of the Indian Ocean, Mauritius is concerned by piracy which poses a threat to global commerce. It hinders economic development and has become a major security issue in the region and beyond.

We welcome the response of the international community to this serious threat. Cognizant of the problems that arise in connection with the prosecution and detention of pirates, Mauritius has offered to assist with the prosecution and detention of pirates.

In this regard, Mauritius and the European Union have signed an agreement, in July this year, to enhance our capacity to contribute to the international effort under way.

If the international response to the famine, in Somalia, is not commensurate with the immense and immediate needs of the people, we fear that the problem will only worsen.

## B. CHAGOS AND TROMELIN

Mr President,

The continued unlawful occupation of the Chagos Archipelago by the United Kingdom is a matter of concern for the region. Mauritius welcomes the support of the African Union and of the Non-Aligned Movement for the territorial integrity of our country. The purported declaration of a Marine Protected Area around the Chagos Archipelago by the United Kingdom in breach of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is another cause for concern. This is why in December 2010 Mauritius commenced arbitration proceedings against the UK under the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea.

As regard Tromelin, Mauritius and France have made progress with an agreement on joint management without prejudice to our sovereignty. However we need to continue our dialogue for at the end of the day, the territorial integrity of Mauritius will not be complete without the return of Tromelin.

## C. MADAGASCAR

As a member of SADC and the current Chair of the Indian Ocean Commission, Mauritius welcomes the signing last week of an agreement between leading stakeholders on a roadmap for the restoration of democracy in our neighbouring State of Madagascar. This agreement was reached following the relentless efforts of SADC and of the IOC to bring the parties together. The implementation of the roadmap requires holding of national and local elections for which important resources need to be mobilized. We call on the United Nations and the international community to extend all their support for the successful implementation of the roadmap.

Monsieur le Président,

L'absence de sécurité que ce soit sur le plan économique, écologique, juridique ou même, dans certains cas, existentiel appelle à une révision des obligations statutaires des Nations Unies. Même si la préoccupation initiale des pères fondateurs concernant les menaces à la sécurité internationale sont toujours valables, la communauté internationale est aujourd'hui aussi préoccupée par d'autres menaces à sa sécurité et par d'autres défis à relever.

Je tiens à ajouter, Monsieur le Président, que dans cette réactualisation de la notion de sécurité et, par conséquent, la redéfinition du rôle des Nations Unies, la communauté internationale doit également promouvoir le dialogue inter-culturel et inter-civilisations. Nous nous félicitons de l'initiative du Secrétaire Général de créer L'Alliance des civilisations - ONU qui a pour mission d'améliorer la compréhension

**et les relations entre Nations et Peuples de cultures et des religions différentes, et de contribuer à freiner les forces qui alimentent la polarisation et les extrémismes.**

**Les tensions résultent souvent de l'ignorance, de la peur des autres et d'un sentiment de déni de justice. Il est donc essentiel non seulement de maintenir le dialogue entre les nations et les peuples, mais aussi de promouvoir la connaissance des cultures et des civilisations.**

**Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.**

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