

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF



SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

(Unidade - Disciplina - Trabalho)

SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY

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UNITED NATIONS**

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Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary General,

Heads of State and Government,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Your Excellencies,

The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe joins the other speakers present in this great global forum in congratulating Your Excellency for your election to the presidency of this 66th session of the UN General Assembly.

Your election is proof that the member countries of our Organization acknowledge the experience of more than 30 years that You and your country, the State of Qatar, have placed at the service of international peace and security, promoting sustainable development and a dynamic and multiform cooperation among developing countries, as well as the continued search for solutions to the challenges facing the multilateral diplomacy of our time.

We also congratulate you, Mr. President, for the significance of the theme, "The role of mediation in conflict resolution through peaceful means", which for its relevance and timeliness, deserves the attention of all present so that the outcome of the discussions and debates that we have as a collective body may support the effective exercise of the role of the United Nations in global democratic governance and in the implementation of coherent and consistent mechanisms in favor of a more lasting peace and a more secure world.

We further congratulate Mr. Ban Kin-Moon for his reelection to the post of Secretary General of the United Nations, and the effort and skill with which he has guided the destiny of our organization, whose challenges and responsibilities seem increasingly more pressing in this international context.

We would like to pay due homage to the outgoing President, Mr. Joseph Deiss, of the Swiss Confederation, who occupied the presidency of our organization with zeal and dedication during the last twelve months.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

The theme of this 66th session of the General Assembly gives us the opportunity to collectively reflect deeply on what has been the impact of international mediation in resolving conflicts in various regions of our planet.

We would like to bring to this reflection the central role that the UN should play in mediating international conflicts.

This exercise should lead us to the formulation of concrete proposals which could strengthen the capabilities of our organization in this area.

If mediation as a method of resolving conflicts between States began to be used in 1907 in the form of “good offices and mediation”, and on the basis of the Convention for the peaceful regulation of international conflicts, which was signed at The Hague, then the reports of the United Nations on peacekeeping operations remind us that “the restoration of peace focuses on ongoing conflicts and strives to de-escalate them through diplomacy and mediation.”

The widespread use of international mediation as a technique of resolving crises as a fundamental feature of peaceful conflict resolution has not always matched our expectations and produced the expected results.

It is for this reason that S. Tome and Principe believes that instead of international mediation to settle for the status of “peacekeeper”, it must evolve to take on the role of a fundamental actor in "peacebuilding".

In this case, the United Nations would have the responsibility to take care of what appears today to be an inclination towards the professionalization of international mediation, which relegates to the background the legal instruments ratified by specialized institutions to deal with the subject of the conflict at hand.

The definition of the legal status of the mediator, the methodology of mediation and a better involvement of diplomats and experts with experience in international law appear to us as a necessary and important step that the United Nations should take in the future.

The State of São Tomé has followed with concern the growing climate of tension in the international environment, characterized by the proliferation of claims in various regions of our planet, some of them violent and destructive in nature.

This concern is even greater when we have the distinct feeling that in such circumstances, there is an appetite for relegating to second plan the mechanisms available to the United Nations to deal with this matter more effectively and more accurately.

We regret that there has not been a responsible partnership between the African Union and the Security Council to resolve the crisis that befell Libya.

It is therefore urgent that we strengthen the role of the UN by reforming the entire system, a process that should not prolong itself, including the Security Council and some of its specialized agencies, so that they can be in line with the aspirations and demands of the modern world.

Mr. President,

Delegates,

On July 9 this year, Africa saw the birth of one more free and independent nation— the Republic of South Sudan.

The Democratic Republic of S. Tome and Principe, which has already recognized the Brotherly State of South Sudan, congratulates its people for this achievement and wishes its leaders all the success in building a peaceful and prosperous nation.

Similarly, we appeal to the whole international community to make a joint effort to support the new authorities and political actors of that country in order to

maintain the national sovereignty of the new State and to promote a climate of national unity and political stability.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

East Africa is facing a serious food crisis caused by phenomena that are beyond the control of men, and also by the political and military conflict that is still present in parts of Somalia.

It is the duty of all of us to contribute, and without delay, so that a lasting solution can be found for this serious situation.

The Government of São Tomé and Príncipe proclaims its readiness to participate in activities contributing to the alleviation of the suffering of the people of that region.

We associate ourselves to the other members of the United Nations in appealing to the international community to provide more financial resources to support efforts to normalize the situation in this region.

In the particular case of Somalia, our appeal goes to the increase in ODA.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

The United Nations is still addressing the outstanding question of Western Sahara, and has therefore adopted several resolutions aimed at settling the conflict between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front.

Sao Tome and Príncipe would like to see the two parties sit at the negotiating table and urge United Nations to proceed with population's census according to United Nations resolutions with a view to completing this long process of negotiation.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Democracy has the virtue of giving a voice to people so they can choose their leaders by popular, free, direct, secret and transparent votes in voting booths.

The uprisings that started in January this year in North Africa have expressed the sentiments and will of the people of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya to turn the page of their contemporary history.

It is with this conviction that the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe recognizes the new governing powers in these countries as legitimate representatives of their peoples.

We welcome the presence of the National Transitional Council within the United Nations and we urge the authorities of that country to conduct an inclusive process of peaceful transition to ensure peace, stability and social progress in this part of Africa.

Furthermore Sao Tome and Principe is of the view that the political changes should not take place under violence circumstances, and believe that they should take place without any pressure and political interference.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

The Middle East continues to be shaken by an unprecedented wave of conflicts within the borders of some countries that comprise it, as well as in the broader region.

The people in Syria, Yemen and Bahrain have demanded reforms in state institutions; however, we see the continuation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

We reaffirm our support to the Palestinian people's right to guide their destiny, and we advocate, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions, for the existence of a Jewish state.

We take this opportunities to appeal to the Government of the United States of America and European Union to exert their influence in order for the Government of the State of Israel to stop the establishment of settlement in the occupied territories.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

The trade embargo imposed on Cuba decades ago is a major concern for our countries, and for Sao Tome and Principe.

We urge the lifting of the sanctions so that Cuba may participate on equal footing with other states in the process of building an international society that is more balanced and fair.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Our global security is vital to the sustainable development of our countries. The risks that we see today in the world, particularly transnational crime, piracy, trafficking and sale of weapons and drugs are, for S. Tome and Principe, which is a country with a vast expanse of sea borders, located in the Gulf of Guinea, a strong reason for concern.

These phenomena are threats that cannot be ignored and require greater interaction with the Member States with whom we share this vast expanse of sea border, as well as require our commitment to conflict prevention, management and resolution mechanisms, based on fighting organized crime, and with a view to ensuring our collective security.

In this connection, we would like to emphasize the holding in S. Tome and Principe, in March of this year, the 32nd meeting of the Consultative Committee on Security Issues in Central Africa, organized by the Department for Disarmament of the United Nations through its Regional Centre in Lomé.

On behalf of the government of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, we would equally like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban-Kin-Moon, for the timely and correct decision he made of giving Africa its own Central Office, a decision we believe will contribute greatly to the promotion and development of actions to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts in the region and that will assist member countries to cope with possible threats to their sovereignty.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

The profound changes wrought in the international political scene, resulting from structural changes in the world economy, pose new challenges to countries like S. Tome and Principe. My country, in its capacity as a micro island state, advocates greater access to the various opportunities that present themselves at the international level, in particular the possibility of obtaining more official development assistance and facilities to attract foreign investment.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is our collective responsibility to take measures to address the harmful effects of climate change, ensuring the continuity of the Clean Development Mechanism, particularly for the Least Developed Countries. We appreciate the political willingness of Member States to further pursue the building of the necessary consensus to achieve significant and legally binding results in Durban at the next Conference of States Parties, thus guaranteeing the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.

However, climate change has caused imbalances in the micro climate of our country, with drastic consequences on our domestic production, and that constitutes a threat to Food Security in Sao Tome and Principe.

In this perspective, and in order to combat this scourge, the civil society in Sao Tome has been advocating the need to deepen the study of the causes and adverse effects of climate change in S. Tome and Principe.

To fulfill this goal, the authorities of my country would like to continue to rely on the invaluable collaboration and availability so far expressed by the international community in general, and in particular by the specialized organizations of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

It could not end this speech without addressing the situation over the two straits. As has been happening since 2009 in relation to the WHO, and taking into account that not only does Taiwan have an enormous potential, it also has a population of around 23 million people, its participation in UN Specialized Agencies could constitute a substantial contribution to the international community.

In this regard, we urge the relevant UN bodies to act in order to seek ways and means to ensure the participation of Taiwan in some of the mechanisms and agencies of the UN System, in particular the International Civil Aviation Organization and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe has just concluded the consolidation of its democratic process and power transition over an Election by universal suffrage, which was direct and anonymous.

The new president-elect took office on the 3rd of September of this year.

Domestically, the Government of the Republic is undertaking actions to reduce poverty, and promote economic growth and institutional reforms, particularly in the area of Justice in order to strengthen the capacities of the democratic institutions and the development of the country.

With regard to the Millennium Development Goals, set by the United Nations for 2015, the Democratic Republic of S. Tomé and Príncipe has made significant progress, particularly in the areas of Education and Health. We recognize, however, that more efforts should be developed to attain the desired goal.

To achieve these objectives, our State desires to continue to benefit from the continued and multiform support of the International Community.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate the readiness of the Government of the Republic of S. Tome and Principe to participate in efforts to mobilize the will and synergies for the noble principles and objectives that underlie the creation of the United Nations.

Thank you for your attention.