



*PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM
OF LESOTHO TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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STATEMENT

BY

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
MR. MOTSOAHAE THOMAS THABANE
PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO**

AT THE

**PLENARY OF THE
SIXTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**27 SEPTEMBER 2012
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Please check against delivery

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

Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over the 67th Session of the General Assembly. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation during your tenure of office. Your impeccable credentials and experience assure us of a successful 67th Session. I also wish to commend your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser for his sterling leadership during the previous session.

Mr. President,

The formation of the United Nations (UN) by 51 Countries after the Second World War, ushered in hope for collective security, shared prosperity and justice in international relations. Six decades have passed and the Membership of this Organization has swelled more than three fold. But, obstacles still remain in the path towards creating a world that was envisioned by our forebears. We know the solutions that can effectively address the multifaceted challenges that confront our world. But increasingly, it is difficult to arrive at these solutions within the multilateral system.

Unilateral actions that defy civility and international law have increased in their impunity and frequency on the international stage. Despite the lessons of history, there are countries that still believe they can solve the political problems of our

time through war and coercion. It does not matter to them that history has shown that the goal of domination through the use of force is not only illusive and dangerous but is unsustainable.

Humanity derives no comfort from the potential conflict between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the western powers over the Iran's nuclear programme. This looming crisis can be avoided, not through the threats that are being made against Iran, but through negotiations that are based on the respect of sovereign equality and the recognition of the rights and legitimate fears of all Parties involved. Our generation is already faced with too many problems. Surely we cannot afford another avoidable war.

We are saddened by the increasing tension in the East China Sea between the two most respectable Members of the International Community, namely; the Peoples Republic of China and Japan. No one must take advantage of this situation to fan the flames of discord between these two great Nations of ancient civilization. Instead, we must encourage them to resolve their differences with maturity through peaceful dialogue.

In the Middle East, it is about time that individual interests gave way to compassion and reason, so that the People of Palestine can enjoy their inalienable right to self-determination in our life time. Two States that co-exist side by side in peace and security, have long been recognized by the international Community as the only plausible route to enduring peace and stability in the region. The State of Israel must be prevailed upon to support this solution. It must stop building illegal settlements in the Palestinian lands, which potentially render the prospects of a two states solution irrelevant.

Our call for the lifting of the economic embargo against the Republic of Cuba for the past twenty years has not been heeded. Our thoughts are with the ordinary People of Cuba who, for decades, have been denied the fruits of globalization and prosperity through no fault of their own. This unfortunate situation has continued for too long and it must be resolved. We call on the stake holders involved to search for a just and peaceful solution, just as we continue to call on the Kingdom of Morocco to cooperate with the International Community, and facilitate the independence and self-determination of the People of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic.

Mr. President,

Peace within and among nations is a fundamental condition for development. The dream for a prosperous world will continue to be an illusion if tensions persist and our world is perpetually at war with itself. That is why we welcome, as timely and relevant, the choice of the theme for this Session; **“Bringing about adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations by peaceful means”**.

Today, many nations are rising up against dictatorial regimes in defence of their basic human rights and freedoms. The popular democratic uprising in the Arab World has underscored the frustration of the people with long standing political repression and lack of accountability. In some Arab countries this quest for freedom, human rights and democracy is met with atrocious force and brutality. The Government of Syria must accept popular legitimacy and supremacy of the People’s aspirations before it is too late. Further militarization of the situation in Syria will make the conflict too costly in human life.

At the same time, we call on all Countries to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Syria in a manner that undermines the prospects of peace in that Country.

True revolutions need no external sponsors. The efforts of the International Community must focus on assisting the Syrian People to find a negotiated, peaceful and lasting settlement to the ongoing conflict in their country.

Mr. President,

Africa too is trying hard to rid itself of wars and conflicts. While we thought we had dealt with the scourge of coups d'état, it has recently reared its ugly head in a few African Countries.

We call on the International Community to join hands with the African Union and stand firm in refusing to recognize any government that comes to power through unconstitutional means. It is indeed a mockery of the UN – an Organisation that cherishes democratic values and principles - to accord legitimacy to unconstitutional regimes by allowing them to participate in its activities on equal footing with **bona fide** Members. As Africa, we have adopted a policy of zero tolerance to unconstitutional changes of governments, and have remained steadfast in our resolve to refuse to recognize governments that have no democratic legitimacy. We urge the International Community to support this policy and make it universal.

Africa has not been without successes in pursuing settlement of disputes by peaceful means. The United Nations, the African Union and other stakeholders worked together with the Somali Authorities to pave the way for peace in Somalia. The positive results of that joint effort are beginning to be visible. Remarkable strides towards democracy and state building have been registered. The election of the president less than two weeks ago is a cause for celebration. Today, the people of Somalia have reason to hope that they can put the unfortunate era of instability behind them.

It is important to recognise, however, that the road ahead for the Government and People of Somalia is still long and steep. The continued and unfaltering support of the International Community is indispensable for ensuring that Somalia does not relapse into conflict and become a failed State.

Mr. President,

The development and possession of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction remain a serious concern for the peace and security of mankind. Some States possess these weapons in large quantities and have not remained faithful to their commitments under the Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). These states often threaten and humiliate Non-Nuclear Weapons States. That is why other Countries aspire to acquire nuclear weapons. We must renew our collective commitment to a nuclear weapons free world – a world that is safe for future generations, sustained by the shared values of universal peace and prosperity.

In the same way, for as long as international trade in small arms, light weapons and other conventional weapons, remains unregulated, peace will continue to elude us. The failure of the international community to conclude a robust legally binding Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) less than three months ago has left an indelible mark on our generation. We need to step up efforts during this 67th Session and live up to our responsibilities. Conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, are the real weapons of mass destruction in Africa; they fuel conflict and account for scores of deaths of our People every day.

Mr. President,

Across the globe, military and political repression have combined with religious intolerance to sustain the specter of terrorism that continues to besiege our world. While the International Community must address these root causes, there can be no

acceptable justification for terrorism because it is both brutal and indiscriminate and its brunt is on the innocent people, including women and children. Lesotho condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It does not matter if it is sponsored by states or individuals, or whether its evil schemes are carried out by crude means or the most sophisticated of weaponry. The recent murder of American diplomats in Libya demonstrates the brutality and senselessness of terrorism. It deserves our strongest condemnation. We extend our sincere condolences to the people and Government of the United States of America.

A few days ago, we had an opportunity to reaffirm our resolve to uphold the rule of law both at the national and international levels. Respect for the rule of law is a precondition for guaranteeing fundamental freedoms and respect for human rights. Similarly, strengthening the rule of law at the international level is critical for effectively addressing our current global challenges. International law is the very foundation of peaceful coexistence between nations.

The role played by the International Court of Justice is sacrosanct as an instrument for peaceful resolution of conflicts and a bedrock of the international legal order. Lesotho reaffirms her support for this principal judicial organ of the UN, and other established international courts and tribunals. But, these bodies must not be politicized so that they can retain their integrity and fairness.

Mr. President,

It is almost four years since the multiple global crises befell us, yet the prospects for economic recovery remain gloomy. Evidence of climate change is all around us. Extreme weather conditions, floods, drought, soil degradation and the rise of sea-levels, threaten the very existence of humanity. In my country, drought and floods have heightened food insecurity, and famine is looming. In August this year,

my Government has had to declare that Lesotho is in the situation of food crisis and called on the Development Partners to assist. This followed a severe drought that afflicted Lesotho in the last planting season. I am humbled to repeat that call for help before this august Body. Our response to the crisis will focus on the priorities of subsidizing agricultural inputs and promoting drought resistant crops as well as on scaling up conservation farming and providing nutrition services to mothers of infants, including young children.

We went to Rio in June this year with a determination to adopt ambitious and measurable steps to address sustainable development. Regrettably, Rio+20 did not meet everyone's expectations. Lack of a concrete commitment by the Developed Countries to provide the Developing Countries with finance and technology is a source of concern. Nevertheless, there is still hope that a sustainable future is within reach. We must continue to work for the **"Future we Want"** and deserve.

As we march forward, we must ensure that the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their interface with the post 2015 development agenda is done carefully and in an inclusive manner. We must avoid two parallel tracks for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and SDGs. For us, SDGs should be viewed as complementary to and not as a substitute for the MDGs.

Mr. President

The UN that has remained the same for the past 67 years cannot be effective in efficiently addressing the challenges of our time. The need for early reform of the UN, in particular the Security Council, was universally agreed by the International Community at the Millennium Summit in 2005. Yet, seven years later, negotiations on the reform of the Council are still without progress.

As the status quo is maintained, the Council remains largely inept in the discharge of its mandate. Let us resolve to make the 67th Session one of action and less rhetoric.

Allow me to conclude by pointing out that a responsive, effective and efficient multilateral system is the only answer to the problems of the 21st Century. It must be a United Nations that draws on the full diversity of its Membership. With the necessary commitment and political will this goal can be attained.

I thank you.