

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE,
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AT THE
GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS' GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 27TH SEPTEMBER,
2013**

Mr. President;

Mr. Secretary-General;

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Allow me to begin by congratulating you Mr. President on your well-deserved election to steer the affairs of 68th General Assembly of our esteemed organisation. As I congratulate you, I would like to assure you of Tanzania's support and cooperation in the discharge of your responsibilities. I also wish to acknowledge and commend your predecessor, His Excellency Vuc Jeremic for his outstanding leadership of the 67th General Assembly. A lot was achieved because of his visionary and wise leadership.

In the same vein, I would like to pay glowing tribute to our illustrious Secretary General for the excellent work he is doing for the United Nations and humanity at large.

My delegation and I, find the theme of this year's General Assembly to be timely and very opportune. Indeed, we should start now to set the stage for the post 2015 development agenda. Hence, for the theme of this 68th General Assembly to be "Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage" is the wisest thing to do. It affords us the opportunity to know where we are with regard to the Millennium Development Goals and decide what needs to be done to complete the unfinished business and enable us to make informed decision beyond 2015.

The Status of MDGs

Mr. President;

Millennium Development Goals framework is the best development framework ever developed to address global and national development challenges. The world has never witnessed such a coalescence of concerted efforts into a unified framework. It is heartwarming indeed to note that progress towards attaining MDGs has been made in the last 13 years. However, the progress varies from one goal to another and is highly uneven among nations and continents.

Mr. President;

Although extreme poverty has been halved at the global level, over **1.2 billion** people are still trapped in extreme poverty; and an estimated **19,000** children under the age of five and around **800** women die every day mostly from preventable and curable diseases and other causes. This is totally unacceptable in the world of plenty we live in today where there is unprecedented advancement in science and technology which can be leveraged to solve almost all development challenges facing humanity. In a world which has enough food to feed everybody, nobody should go hungry or be undernourished. In a world with so much wealth, there is no reason why poverty, hunger and deprivation should ever continue to inflict pain and cause misery to many people. It is incomprehensible therefore, why the MDG's could not be attained to the fullest.

This reality must be taken into account when we attempt to find ways to tackle unfinished business of the 2000 MDGs and design the post-2015 development agenda. Mechanism must be put in place to ensure that sources of financing will be adequate and reliable.

Mr. President;

Tanzania made significant progress in implementing the MDGs. We have already achieved the targets in four of the eight MDGs well before the

set deadline of 2015. On MDG 2 we have achieved a target on universal primary education enrolment. On MDG 3 we have achieved target of parity of boys and girls in both primary and secondary schools enrolment. This is different from the past when there were more boys than girls. As a matter of fact, the trend appears to be tilting towards getting more girls than boys in the near future. We are yet to meet targets with regard to the ratio of females to males in tertiary education and in position of decision making particularly Parliament. However, it is possible to achieve the target on Parliamentarians by 2015 by taking advantage of the ongoing Constitutional review process.

We are on target with regard to reducing HIV/AIDS infection rate, the requirement of MDG 6. Similarly, we have attained MDG 4 on Child Mortality which is big achievement indeed, compared to where we were in the year 2000. But it is depressing we are not on track with regard to MDG 5 on Maternal Health. We are intensifying efforts to do better in order to improve the maternal health among Tanzania women.

With regard to MDG 7 on Environmental Sustainability we are on target with regard to drinking water for urban population. But, we are lagging behind with respect to rural water supply as well as access to improved sanitation both in rural and urban areas.

That notwithstanding, we have not relented in our pursuit of the targets in the MDGs which we are not likely to achieve by 2015. This will be the unfinished business for which we need to take action probably over and above what we are doing. We are lagging far behind with regard to MDG 1 in its four main indicators. There is not much possibility of achieving the targets despite the efforts we have been making.

We have been intensifying actions to transform and modernise our agriculture. Our aim is to increase productivity and farmers' incomes as well as ensure food and nutrition security for themselves and the nation.

Agriculture employs 75 percent of the Tanzania population and this is where the majority of poor are concentrated. Improved agriculture means less poor and hungry people. Plans are also underway to expand the conditional cash transfer programme under the Tanzania Social Action Fund supported by the World Bank. We want to increase the size of investment to benefit more vulnerable people so as to accelerate the implementation of MDG 1 in the shortest possible time.

Mr. President;

Generally, it remains my firm belief that despite some failures, MDGs have been nothing short of a remarkable success. If the developed countries provided the financing as envisaged under MDG 8 and as per the Monterrey Consensus and their own commitment in different fora of the G8 and G20, we would have implemented all the MDGs to the letter and spirit. It is in this regard we would find unrealistic any approach to the post-2015 Development agenda that does not address the critical issue of ensuring adequate financing. This is also true with regard to accelerating implementation of the MDGs in the remaining period.

We will continue to look at the United Nations for guidance and leadership in steering both processes to their successful conclusion.

The Reform of the United Nations

Mr. President;

The fact that the United Nations needs reform is a matter of little disagreement. Our collective failure to respond to this reality creates scepticism on our common resolve to strengthen an institution that is meant to serve nations and peoples. The reform we demand is long overdue. While we welcome discussions on the reform of the ECOSOC, Africa will not relent in demanding reform of the Security Council so that the continent, with the largest membership of the UN, has a permanent voice.

Global and Regional Conflict Situation

Mr. President;

Regrettably conflicts have continued to interfere in our development endeavours as they linger on in different parts of the world, from the Sahel to eastern DRC, Syria to Afghanistan, and other areas. They have caused enormous loss of innocent lives as populations continue to endure untold sufferings. The recent use of chemical weapons in Syria as confirmed by the United Nations inspections team to kill innocent people is rather distressing. We condemn such flagrant and senseless killing of innocent people including children in Syria. We commend the Secretary General and the UNSC for way they handle the matter. I believe the doors for a peaceful solution to the Syrian problem are not closed and that a military solution should be the last resort.

The Situation in the Great Lakes Region and DRC

Mr. President;

The United Republic of Tanzania regrets to see the suffering of the people of DRC as a consequence of the conflict in Eastern DRC has continued for far too long. We hope this time around the initiative of the Secretary General which resulted in the establishment of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Great Lakes Region and DRC signed in February, 2013 will deliver lasting peace, security and development for the DRC and the Great Lakes Region. We highly commend the UN Secretary General for his vision and leadership in this regards. We welcome the choice of Her Excellency Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland as the United Nations' Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region. She will surely help advance the cause of peace in the region if supported by all of us in the region and the international community.

Part of the enduring problem facing the DRC is the proliferation of armed groups with varied interests. Bolder action is required to uproot these negative elements. These groups should be neutralized and disarmed. It is in this context that we welcomed MONUSCO's expanded mandate as per resolution 2098 (2013) of the Security Council that among other things established the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB). Tanzania agreed to contribute troops to the FIB because it can help to deter belligerence and create a conducive environment for a political process to take effect. Of course the panacea to the DRC problem is political rather than military.

Tanzania's Role in Peacekeeping

Mr. President;

Since 2007 Tanzania has become proactive in contributing troops to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. With over 2,500 peace keepers in Lebanon, Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo, we are the 6th contributor of military and police peacekeepers in Africa and 12th globally. We are partaking this noble endeavour, as members of the United Nations with the duty of advancing and upholding the ideals of our esteemed organisation.

We are satisfied that our contribution, though modest, is having a broader impact to those who have experienced the horrors of conflict. In this endeavours our peacekeepers have paid the ultimate price as was the case with the loss of we seven brave soldiers in Darfur, Sudan under UNAMID and two in Eastern DRC under MONUSCO. These are our national heroes whose sacrifices are not in vain.

The death of our peacekeepers was a grim reminder of the dangers facing peacekeepers around the world. It is disturbing that, armed groups and peace spoilers are increasingly attacking these servants of peace. We must unreservedly condemn all these attacks as there is no cause or

justification for such barbaric attack which constitute a crime under international law. The UN Security Council whose primary role is the maintenance of international peace and security should be in the forefront in condemning such barbaric acts in good time.

Unilateral Sanctions and Embargo

Mr. President;

At this juncture, I wish to reiterate our call for ending unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba which has lasted for more than 50 years. Our call to end this unilateral embargo is not only predicated on its legality but also on humanitarian concerns particularly the negative effects of the quality of life of innocent Cubans.

We are deeply encouraged by recent developments especially of removing restrictions on family travel, cash remittances and telecommunication services. We believe this spirit will culminate into total cessation of the embargo in not to distant a future so that Cubans will be relieved of enormous economic, social and financial hardships they have endured for far too long.

Western Sahara

Mr. President;

The quest to resolve the dispute over the sovereignty of Western Sahara is also long overdue. It is high time that the United Nations took bold actions to give the people of Saharawi the opportunity to decide on their fate. It is incomprehensible why the Security Council which has been able to handle bigger security challenges cannot decide on the matter for nearly forty years now.

International Criminal Court

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

You will agree with me that the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC) was a major milestone of the international criminal justice system. Indeed, the Court's creation as a machinery for fighting impunity was only possible with the support of Africa.

However, a decade after its entry into force, a rift has grown between the Court and the continent. The court is perceived as irresponsible to what are, in our view, legitimate concerns of African people.

It continues to ignore repeated requests and appeals by the African Union. It was sad to note that legitimate requests regarding the timing of the trials of President Uhuru Kenyatta and Deputy President William Ruto went unanswered. This attitude has become a major handicap that fails to reconcile the Court's secondary and complementary role in fighting impunity. Indeed, the Court's rigidity has proven counterproductive and stands to undermine the support it enjoys in Africa.

Terrorist Attack in Kenya

Tanzania condemns in the strongest terms possible the cowardly terrorist attack that happened last week at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya which left at over 60 innocent people dead and hundreds others injured. I spoke and wrote to President Uhuru Kenyatta to express our sadness and dismay. I also reaffirm our solidarity with him and people of Kenya during these difficult moment and the fight against terrorism. This horrendous attack is a heart-breaking reminder of the threat that terrorism poses to humanity. Indeed none of us is completely safe from terrorism as it can happen anywhere, anytime and to anyone.

We must increase vigilance, enhance regional and global cooperation and scale up the fight against terrorism. The challenge ahead of us cannot be understated nor underestimated. The success will depend on our unity

of purpose and determination. At this juncture I would like to commend His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya for his exemplary leadership in the wake of the attack and his unshaken resolve and firm commitment to support the peace building efforts in Somalia and elsewhere. We are with Kenyan people at this time of distress and grief.

Conclusion

Mr. President;

In conclusion, I would like to stress once more that, we are passing through a time of great opportunity despite the many challenges. We must take advantage of the current scientific and technological innovations; information and communication technologies; and knowledge and lessons learned from the implementation of development programmes, including MDGs to build a world without poverty, hunger, diseases and deprivation.

A world that protects its environment and nature. It is possible to have a world without wars, conflicts and acts of terrorism. A world where human rights are respected, rule of law observed, democracy reigns and civil society is regarded as an integral part of the development endeavour. With stronger multilateralism and the United Nations leading the way and, with strong political will on the part of national leaders and the people everything is possible. We can make our world a better place for everyone to live.

I thank you for your kind attention.

