



Republic of Cape Verde

*Permanent Mission of Cape Verde to the United Nations*

## **INTERVENTION**

**of**

**H.E. Mr. José Maria Neves**

**Prime Minister of the Republic of Cape Verde**

**In the occasion of the " Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the  
Stage "**

**68<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly**

**NEW YORK, 28 September, 2013**

Mister President of the General Assembly

Mister Secretary General of the United Nations

Excellencies Heads of State and Government

Ladies and gentlemen,

I greet you all with satisfaction and enthusiasm.

To begin, I would like to mention the remarkable work the United Nations has done so that we all might have the opportunity to push forward the Millennium Development Goals and so that today we can work together to set a new development agenda post-2015.

Indeed, this is a global challenge that, besides inaugurating another era in global development, challenges us to meet the eight Millennium Development Goals. The focus of this session is fairness and dignity for all, as was declared by the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, a task that challenges everyone and requires new attitudes and behaviors on the premise that a better world is possible.

Cape Verde, a Small Island Developing State that has been independent for less than 39 years, has already achieved most of the targets envisioned, and it will continue its efforts to meet all the Millennium Development Goals.

Thanks to a Transformation Agenda which we have been promoting since 2001, significant progress has occurred in the country, then on the list of Least Developed countries. These developments took place both in the socio-economic and political arenas and have improved the overall standard of living of our people.

Our focus and investment in access to education, health, water and food, have been clear, unambiguous and systematic. So have our efforts to competitively integrate our economy into the international market, with the support of our international partners.

Simultaneously, the Transformation Agenda, which has been perfectly in line with the commitments and targets of the Millennium Development Goals, created the conditions for Cape Verde's historical transition to the realm of Middle-Income Countries, although still within the Lower Middle Income scale given the strong impact of the international crisis that has conditioned the dynamics of some ongoing progress.

As we balance accounts with this great Assembly, we are proud to say that the poverty rate has decreased in the decade since 2002, from 20.5% to 12%. Our indicators show that we have

reduced poverty by half and that we are clearly on a downward trend. Our current challenge is the close monitoring necessary to prevent any setbacks deriving from the global economic situation and its impact on Cape Verde.

In fact, despite the graduation to Middle Development Country, our indicators still show high rates of poverty, inequality and unemployment as well as insufficient access to many goods and services. We are still short of our goal of achieving well-being and a high quality of life for all our people.

Cape Verdeans are ready to push for the evolution of the postulates of the MDGs and replace 'reducing' with 'eradicating' extreme poverty, leaving no one behind. Moreover, in Cape Verde we are ready to and have already begun, to put the issue of economic sustainability at the center of the country's development agenda.

We recognize that transformation in Cape Verde is more than keyword; it is a work agenda stemming from inclusive growth. In addition, we have been creating accountable institutions, open to all, to ensure good governance.

With this perspective, we have refocused our internal policy, and, thus, mobilized national will while appealing to support from our international partners, towards the goal of Advanced Development on the horizon of 2030. This is what it means for us to engage in a post-2015 Agenda.

At this time, we are in a transition situation. The instruments created alone are not enough to answer the questions of the present, nor to prepare for a future that points to Advanced Development, unless it is a part of a global agenda, led by the United Nations and intensive international cooperation and partnership, both at the multilateral and the bilateral levels.

Cape Verde has been committed to this joint effort. Cape Verdeans look with acuity at global issues such as climate change, hunger and malnutrition and different forms of inequality, as well as to the guarantee of environmental sustainability and national and international partnerships in support of Global Development.

Climate change is a pressing problem of our times that needs to be addressed with urgency and a great sense of responsibility. Indeed, the world has reached record highs in terms of emissions and concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, now reaching about 400 parts per million. This could mean the destruction of our development efforts and, even worse, a clear exacerbation of social tensions, opening doors to potential national and regional conflicts both. Similarly, the impacts on global food security should be stressed. Moreover, ocean acidification increased at a rate never reached in 55 million years. Ultimately, the disappearance of numerous marine species became inevitable. Therefore, we must all face this issue that endangers our common future and take the necessary decisions, fulfilling our financial commitments for change, particularly in the most vulnerable countries.

We urge all members of this General Assembly to come together in a historic convergence for the Environment. The major goal is to implement the policies established in the final document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, entitled "The Future We Want".

Concerning the post-2015 agenda, the issue of employment dominates the concerns of Cape Verdeans. The subject occupies the top spot among all consulted who identify employment as essential to achieving economic and human development.

Another serious issue has to do with the sustainability of social security. We need a more universal welfare system and we have to engineer and introduce instruments for that purpose. This is only possible with a more dynamic economy.

There will be no Transformation Agenda if we do not create solid, sustainable foundations for social support. To do so, we need to grow and expand wealth. We need to create a wave of modernization for society and for the competitive factors of our economy so as to improve the business environment and attract foreign investment.

The greater result will be economic growth and the creation of wealth to induce the improvement of indicators that matter.

We must recognize that there is room for improvement, particularly in terms of reducing State bureaucracy and increasing competitiveness, as well as making foreign investment more streamlined and more efficient for entrepreneurship. We are urging our citizens to be productive, competitive and prosperous, without losing the vast Cape Verdean capacity for generosity, solidarity and responsibility.

The continuation of the international crisis and its impact on all countries create serious problems for the entire world community. In the case of Cape Verde, this situation poses serious challenges that we must overcome, challenges to accelerating economic growth, promoting employment and reducing poverty.

In this sixty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, we reiterate our commitment to Peace and Dialogue, within the parameters held sacred in the United Nations Charter.

Our vision of the United Nations is of a more cohesive and united organization, in which efforts are directed towards the prosperity of Nations. Our vision is of the General Assembly as a great forum for dialogue on Global Challenges of the Planet and Mankind. And our vision of its Security Council is of one with a more balanced representation more suited to the geopolitical developments that the World has known since 1945.

As a country with Portuguese as our official language, this is an occasion to reaffirm our desire and commitment to cultural diversity. In the eagerness for multiculturalism that is our

prerogative, we plead that the Portuguese language - the 5th most spoken language in the world, connecting States and peoples across the five continents - be an official language or work language of international organizations, particularly the United Nations.

One more comment to all for us to position ourselves, following the United Nations Experts Report, against the criminal and unacceptable use of chemical weapons in Syria, which we have followed with great attention. We welcome the progress made towards dialogue, particularly the joint search for peaceful solutions, especially at the United Nations.

Incidentally, we are against the use of weapons of mass destruction and we will continue to align with subsequent initiatives towards their eradication. As we are against war and belligerence, we advocate for the implementation of the Global Strategy to combat violence.

We also want to express our solidarity with the Government and People of Kenya, as well as our unequivocal condemnation of the reprehensible acts of barbarism and human savagery that occurred last Saturday in Nairobi.

We also reaffirm, on this platform, our already firm will to cooperate with everyone to reduce regional and global tensions, so as to extend the understanding and acceptance of sovereignties, freedoms and human rights.

Finally, we reiterate before you, our preference for the joint definition of new targets that will stipulate the fundamentals for the prosperity of countries and for the welfare of people in the world, searching together for a Post 2015 Agenda.

Cape Verde is committed to giving its contribution to the creation of a new goals scenario, to succeed and complement the Millennium Development Goals.

To meet the eight Goals is our common commitment and creating a new agenda after 2015 in favor of sustainable development is our shared responsibility. The manner in which we do it will determine our common destiny. The importance of our decisions and the responsibility to make them within the United Nations framework are evident.

Let us get to work! For a new global interaction, that covers a joint vision of promoting progress.

Cape Verde is firmly committed to the establishment of a development agenda post-2015, that it might also help us create the Future We Want.

We assure you that we will do everything in our power in the name of a better future, filled with freedom, equality and prosperity. You can count on us.

Thank you