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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Remarks**

**By**

**H.E. Mr. Hailemariam Dessalegn**

**Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic  
Republic of Ethiopia**

**At**

**The General Debate of the 70th session of the  
United Nations General Assembly**

**28 September 2015**

**New York**

***Mr. President,***

Let me begin by congratulating you on assuming the Presidency of the General Assembly at this important juncture in the history of the United Nations. This has indeed been a seminal year. Not only is it a year for commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our only universal organization, but it has also been a year when bold actions were taken for the sake of our people and planet.

I would also like to express my profound appreciation to your predecessor, our brother from Africa, who successfully steered the work of this august body over the past one year, which witnessed difficult intergovernmental negotiation processes. His contribution in facilitating these processes and advancing the UN agenda was indeed significant. We owe him a debt of gratitude for all his tireless efforts.

Allow me also to pay special tribute to our Secretary-General for his dedication and tireless efforts for the realization of the aims and purposes of the United Nations.

***Mr. President,***

What we have achieved thus far in the course of this year through difficult negotiations and compromise by adopting a compact for global partnership in the framework of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in July, as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the historic Summit just concluded, make it evident that we are indeed potentially in a watershed moment in the history of the UN. It is our confidence that the same collective resolve would be demonstrated by member States as we take up the challenge of an equally transformative change in UN Peace Operations.

The political will and commitment that we have demonstrated in adopting the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda, gives us hope and optimism that we can secure a new globally binding climate agreement under the auspices of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris in December. I, therefore, wish, Mr. President, to assure you of my delegation's fullest support in the effective discharge of your heavy responsibilities at this momentous and historic year.

***Mr. President,***

Ethiopia is indeed proud to be one of the founding members of the United Nations. Although it could not count much in its hour of need on the support of the League of Nations, of which it was also a member, nonetheless, Ethiopia never lost confidence in multilateralism and remained a staunch supporter of the principle of collective security embodied in the United Nations Charter.

It is based on this conviction that Ethiopia has been actively contributing to the advancement of the principles and purposes of the United Nations, including by deploying its forces as part of the blue helmets since the early days of the UN. It gives us great satisfaction to note that Ethiopia is now the second largest contributor to UN Peacekeeping and I wish to take this opportunity to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to continue playing an active role to help ensure the United Nations becomes more effective and secure greater legitimacy.

***Mr. President,***

As we mark the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our organization, it is only fitting that we take stock of the achievements and challenges over the past seven decades and draw appropriate lessons from history as we move forward. That the world has made tremendous progress in a wide range of areas through the advancement of the noble objectives enshrined in the UN Charter is not in doubt. The Organization has done commendable work to foster international cooperation for development, to promote respect for human rights and address humanitarian problems.

Nevertheless, what has been achieved so far is a far cry compared to the Herculean challenges we face today. Nor can we overlook our very many failures as an organization. This is very apparent in the peace and security area, as was so ably laid out by the High Level Panel on Peace Operations, as it is with respect to the creation of a level playing field in international economic and trade relations.

Despite all this, however, there is one thing which is self-evident. The United Nations is an organization that we all cannot afford to live without. In spite of its shortcomings, the United Nations remains the only universal organization that we have – whether big or small, rich or poor – providing us with a unique platform to advance our common objectives and address those myriad problems we collectively face.

The challenge that we have to address at this juncture in the history of the organization is more or less obvious. It has to do with how we can make it relevant and effective as we collectively strive to meet the needs and aspirations of our people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This I believe is the main essence of the anniversary celebration aptly captured in the theme – “Strong UN. Better World”. But, the UN is after all an inter-governmental organization whose strength and weakness cannot be deciphered independent of the role of its members. It is, therefore, up to us to empower the organization to fulfill its promises in a new era.

***Mr. President,***

The United Nations is indeed the creation of the post-1945 world order and the devastating experiences of the Second World War and the Great Depression which preceded it. That, no doubt, very much inspired the letter and spirit of the Charter. The world has, however, changed tremendously since then and the very complex and multifaceted challenges we face today are quite different from those that the founders had to deal with in the immediate aftermath of the war. Obviously, the founders would not have been able to anticipate, for instance, the threat of terrorism and violent extremism or the devastating consequences of climate change and other emerging challenges of our time.

On the other hand, not only has membership of the United Nations changed over the years in dramatic manner, but so have geo-political and economic realities of our globe. With the rapid globalization and the dramatic revolution in information technology, today, we are living in a much more inter-connected and inter-dependent world. That is why the United Nations requires the

necessary tools to deal with these challenges and realities so that it could better serve the needs of our peoples and nations in a new and completely different era.

The need to reform the UN System has long been recognized. But forging the necessary compromise among the wider membership has not been an easy task. However, this cannot be delayed any longer. It is very clear that without undertaking the necessary reforms, we will not be able to deliver the transformative agenda we have set for ourselves. That is the reason why it is not enough to adopt the next generation of sustainable development goals whose ambition and transformative aspirations make them truly historic. It is also vital and indispensable that the UN is fit for the Post-2015 era.

Comprehensive reform of the United Nations system, particularly that of the Security Council, is indeed imperative to reflect current geo-political realities and to make the UN more broadly representative, legitimate and effective. In this context, it is only proper that we seize this occasion to, once again, echo Africa's call to be fully represented in all the decision-making organs of the

UN, particularly in the Security Council as encapsulated in the Ezilwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

***Mr. President,***

We in Ethiopia remain fully committed to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. We are indeed very grateful for the support and partnership of the United Nations in our development endeavors. The reason for the remarkable progress that we have made over the past fifteen years, including in achieving most if not all of the Millennium Development Goals, is to be found in our taking charge of our own destiny, devising our own development strategy and mobilizing domestic resources for their implementation. But we also made the best use of development cooperation we have had with the United Nations and other partners.

Ethiopia has embarked on an ambitious transformative agenda with a view to achieving a middle income status by the year 2023. We intend to do so based on a carbon neutral growth through our climate resilient green economy strategy, which is fully

integrated into our national development plan. The results achieved over the past five years are quite encouraging and they have inspired us to do even more through the implementation of the second Growth and Transformation Plan we will be embarking upon soon. It is, therefore, with great optimism that we look at the possibilities that lie ahead, all the more so because we also trust that we are all committed to adhering to the commitment we entered into at the Summit we concluded yesterday.

It is with this deep sense of optimism that I want to conclude by once again reiterating my country's commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations as well as to continue playing an active and constructive role for the realization of its noble objectives.

I thank you.