



Permanent Mission of
The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe to the United Nations

73RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

GENERAL DEBATE

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STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

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Madam President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Your Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Heads of State and Government

Your Excellences Ministers of Foreign Affairs and External Relations

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

Your Excellences,

It is with great honor and satisfaction that, for the first time, I address this magna General Assembly, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communities, representing the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe.

First of all, let me, with great pleasure, address my first words to Her Excellency Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, whom I congratulate for her election to the presidency of the 73rd Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, expressing our support to Your Excellency in the course of your mandate, which, we believe, will be very successful. We emphasize the fact that Your Excellency is only the fourth woman to undertake such a noble function and we hope this number to increase in the future in the name of a greater inclusion of women in positions of such importance in the Organization.

I also congratulate the outgoing President, His Excellency Miroslav Lajcak, for the manner in which he has conducted the work of the previous General Assembly Session, in a judicious, zealous and selfless way, in an extremely difficult international context.

I also would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the memory of the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, the late Kofi Annan. A man who dedicated his life in making the world a more peaceful place and worked tirelessly for that purpose, always with a great sense of our humanity. We must preserve his legacy by continuing to strengthen our Organization as the ultimate and overall guarantor for the search for peaceful, durable, consensual solutions,

legitimated by international law, in order to achieve the desired goals of peace, security, stability and progress for all.

Madam President

Ladies and Gentlemen

We welcome the choice of the theme for this Session: "Making the United Nations Relevant to All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies."

Indeed, our Organization is facing very complex challenges for which it is called to provide effective, concrete and comprehensive responses that are truly relevant to all people.

Let us emphasize the issue of migration, where the global leadership of the United Nations must at all times manifest itself in fostering dialogue among nations seeking global solutions and promoting concerted policies in hosting the refugees, as well as in supporting their countries of origin, to better address this world-wide problem, that often has devastating consequences for those who in search of better living conditions, are exposed to flagrant injustices everywhere.

If we really want peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies, our efforts must continue to be conducted seeking solutions not only to migratory problems but also, at the negotiation table, to mitigate the effects of the current armed conflicts existing throughout the world, and to prevent the emergence and escalation of regional tensions which can generate others of the same kind.

We therefore launch from this tribune a strong appeal to continue the dialogue aiming the peaceful resolution of tensions that are occurring all over the planet, areas of conflict that keep claiming thousands of innocent lives, in particular the conflict in Syria.

We also continue to call for an understanding in the Central African Republic, so that the negotiations can put an end to a conflict that has harmed thousands of people, whose refugee situation has led to a serious humanitarian crisis in the country.

We warmly salute our sister Republic of Guinea Bissau for convening legislative elections next November, and express them the best of lucks as we are certain that these elections will mark a

new era of harmony and prosperity with the resumption of the regular functioning of its democratic institutions.

In the same way, we also salute the Democratic Republic of Congo by convening the general elections scheduled for December this year, and we formulate warm vows for them to be transparent and fair and conducted in a peaceful and harmonious environment.

On the other hand, we are pleased to note that positive steps have been taken concerning the reconciliation processes between Ethiopia and Eritrea as well as between the belligerent parties in the Republic of South Sudan, and we strongly encourage for this path to be continued.

Regarding the Sahara matter, we express our support to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his Personal Envoy, in their efforts to relaunch the political process on the basis of the parameters set by the Security Council in 2007, and we welcome the adoption of its resolution 2414 which calls for the need to achieve a political, pragmatic, realistic and long lasting solution for the dispute.

The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe welcomes the historic developments on the Korean Peninsula and calls on all those involved to continue the dialogue and negotiations in the benefit of the interests of all parties, towards the development of the region.

With regard to the situation in The Middle East, we appeal for the dialogue and the continuation of negotiations to find a peaceful and negotiated solution in respecting to the right of the Palestinian people to conduct their own destiny, accordingly with the fundamental principles of international law.

In the same line, we renew our call for efforts to continue to be pursued to normalize the relations between Cuba and the United States of America so that we can see the lifting of the trade embargo as soon as possible, which has for decades been an obstacle to the progress of that country.

Once again, unfortunately, we must regret the terrorist acts that insist to claim so many lives around the world. Such heinous acts, without any respect for human life, will always merit from us the firmest and vehement condemnation.

We also take this sovereign opportunity to condemn the terrorist acts of Boko Haram on the territory of our neighbors and brothers, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, whose harmful consequences continue to undermine the development and security of the entire Gulf of Guinea.

Likewise, we strongly condemn the terrorist acts that have caused so much suffering to the martyred Peoples of the Sahel region, in particular the Republics of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso.

We reaffirm the strong commitment of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe to actively collaborate with its regional and international partners in all initiatives aimed at eradicating this phenomenon from our societies. Only by acting together can we truly build peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies, as the theme of this session suggests.

Madam President

Ladies and Gentlemen

The leadership role of our Organization undoubtedly goes hand in hand with actions that bring together efforts to combat climate change. Every day we are confronted with the devastating effects of climate change around the world.

Natural disasters are occurring on a larger scale and with greater intensity, leading to the loss of lives, especially in the least developed regions of our planet. The global effort must continue under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and indeed it must be a shared responsibility for everyone, because it is up to all of us to safeguard the future of coming generations.

It is therefore urgent to put into practice the provisions of the Paris Agreement, so that the necessary technical, financial and human resources are properly directed towards the immensity of the task we have in hands. We therefore call for the next Conference of the Parties, the COP 24, which will be held in Katowice, Poland, in December, to be very successful and that the dialogue that has been taken place could in fact make it possible to implement that agreement.

Sao Tome and Principe will do everything in its power to advocate the crucial importance of common and universal efforts to adopt the necessary policies in this regard.

Likewise, we refer to the Sustainable Development Goals, whose achievement of the established targets, in order to really benefit everyone, will greatly require the support of the different specialized agencies of our Organization, in formulating and implementing the policies necessary for its materialization. São Tomé Príncipe notes with particular appreciation what has been the practice in our country, where such collaboration has allowed us to take firm steps in that direction.

We must also highlight and welcome the continued efforts of the African Union in the implementation of the inclusive Agenda 2063, the materialization of which, we believe, will enable African countries to free themselves from the chains of poverty, thus enabling their peoples to have a better future. The spirit that has guided us so far must continue to be strengthened, taking into account our specificities and constantly remembering what unites us: the well-being and development of the whole of Africa.

Madam President

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, a small developing island state, with all the constraints that this condition entails, pursues a policy adapted to its reality, respecting multicultural diversity and human rights.

With an economy that is very vulnerable to external shocks, the Government currently in charge has designed and has made efforts to achieve an ambitious transformation agenda for the 2030 horizon. These actions closely follow the guidelines of both the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

It has been a difficult task and we would like to register the support of both the Organizations, that have closely collaborated with the Government, and our important bilateral partners, who's support the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe widely acknowledges, and since it is not a finished one, we would very much appreciate to continue counting on such contributions.

On next October 7, Sao Tome and Principe will hold legislative, local and regional elections. We call on the international community to join us as independent observers to once again witness the

strength and quality of our democracy, which will be further consolidated with this electoral act that reveals our democratic maturity.

Madam President

Ladies and Gentlemen

Our Organization must indeed assume its global leadership role in the congregation of efforts for the development of all peoples; in the unceasing pursuit of peaceful solutions to the conflicts that continue to exist in the world; in efforts to combat climate change; in reducing inequalities; in promoting gender equality and equity policies; in combating the scourge of terrorism and hatred based on race, sexual orientation and religious beliefs; in promoting intercultural dialogue among peoples; and in the uncompromising defense of peace and human rights.

These values, which we are sure we all share, must be continually observed and all of our efforts must be conducive to their protection and reinforcement in a spirit of frank and open dialogue that benefits all.

The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe maintains and reaffirms its unequivocal commitment to the ideals of peace and fraternity amongst peoples, and will always collaborate very closely so that our common problems could have common solutions and shared responsibilities, so that we can build, under the ideals of our Organization, a more prosperous, just, peaceful and sustainable societies.

I thank you for your attention.