

**Statement by H.E. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah,
President of the Republic of Namibia
on the Occasion of the
High-Level General Debate of the 80th Session
of the United Nations General Assembly**

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Madam President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

When the Founders convened 80 years ago, they did so:

- To establish an organization, among others to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.”
- To reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, dignity of the human person, and equal rights of men and women, and of nations large and small; and
- To lay the groundwork for a durable system that promotes justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and international law.

While over the following decades, we have come close to the brink of war, the United Nations has stood the test of time. From decolonization to promoting the right to self-determination, from conflict prevention and securing peace, to the provision of humanitarian assistance, the UN has continued to fulfill its founding mandate under very difficult circumstances. Therefore, the international community must honour the brave men and women who under the blue flag have been at the forefront in securing world peace.

Namibia’s journey to independence is one of the UN’s most success stories. It was through this very Organization that our forebearers tirelessly petitioned for the end of Apartheid-colonial rule in Namibia, for freedom and independence of our people.

My personal journey with the United Nations begun in 1974 where I have had the privilege to serve my country and Africa in various capacities within the halls of this distinguished global organ. Today, I am deeply honored and humbled to stand before you, as fifth President of the Republic of Namibia, with a mandate to deliver services and ensure justice for all inhabitants of our country. As a woman, I encourage every girl and woman by affirming that, your voice matters. Your vision is needed as it will pave your way to the helm of whatever institution.

Madam President,

Namibia’s 8th Administration is built on the strong foundation and legacy of our predecessors,” under the theme “Unity in Diversity, Natural Resources Beneficiation, and Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development”. That theme aims to shape and transform the Namibian economy through value addition.

Hence, we have identified agriculture, sports, youth empowerment, education and training, creative industries, health services, land and housing as critical sectors, supported by mining, energy, water, tourism, infrastructures development, transport and logistics, to

sustain our economic development, through our long-term development blueprint, Vision 2030.

This Vision is being implemented through a series of National Development Plans (NDPs). Recently, we launched the sixth NDP with its fundamental pillars clearly aligned to the global agenda such as the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Some of our achievements include the launch and the operationalization of a National Youth Fund and, to assist young entrepreneurs. In the area of education, we will abolish registration and tuition fees in all public institutions of high learning and vocational training centers.

On energy, Namibia is diversifying her energy mix, using all our natural resources. In addition, Namibia presented her Energy Compact at the Africa Energy Forum, thus enabling us to access concessional funding for national energy initiatives.

Madam President,

Climate change is scorching our lands and drying up our rivers. Global instability is impacting our markets and jeopardizing our livelihoods. These are interconnected symptoms of a deeper fragility in our shared systems. They require our collective action, rooted in empathy and shared responsibility.

In this regard, I am glad to announce Namibia's bid to host the African Regional Hub of the Green Climate Fund. Furthermore, severe droughts, floods, and other calamities brought about by climate change cannot be overemphasized. Namibia calls for the implementation of the provisions of the "Namib Declaration on a Stronger, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, for a Land-degradation Neutral World".

Namibia acknowledges the technological advances, in all fields, but ethical boundaries must be respected. However, Artificial Intelligence must not be a substitute for human judgment or responsibility. We therefore, call for global standards that ensure that the usage of AI remains transparent, fair for humanity.

Youth unemployment, increased economic inequality, lack of adequate housing, quality education and health care, water, energy, and debt distress, are among the common challenges and no one country can address them alone.

Through multilateral cooperation, our collective action must ensure that we all forge ahead to make the world a better place, and to work together on those challenges in line with our theme, "Better Together".

Madam President,

Thirty Years, since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we have much to celebrate and to ponder on. Namibia continues to make progress in the area of women in decision making. Currently, Namibians Cabinet has 57% of women.

As we gear up to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted during Namibia's Presidency of the UN Security Council, Namibia will host two high-level events in New York and Windhoek. I look forward to participation of all members states in these events, to collectively reaffirm commitment to the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. Through the Namibia International Women's Peace Centre, we will continue to advocate for the universal implementation of WPS Agenda.

Madam President,

We note the ongoing efforts of the UN to ensure that we remain fit-for-purpose, including the UN80 Initiative. We need an agile United Nations that is inclusive. Respect for the UN Charter and its purposes and principles must be our guiding star for our future endeavours.

We meet against a backdrop of profound global tensions. The world is fractured by conflict, displacement, and economic instability, straining multilateral cooperation, further fragmenting consensus. A global liquidity crisis threatens to plunge millions of people into poverty and insecurity. For Namibia, these crises are real, they impact our communities, test the resilience of our ecosystems and thus, need urgent action.

In this context, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), is committed to promoting peace, security and stability in the Eastern DRC. Namibia welcomes the ongoing efforts by the AU, SADC and EAC to align the Luanda and Nairobi Peace Processes and encourages the continued strengthening of political and security aspects of the challenges faced in our region.

We further call upon the UN Security Council and the Good Office of the UN Secretary General, to strengthen negotiations and peacekeeping initiatives, towards the resolution of all conflicts, including those in different parts of Africa.

The impasse in the UN Security Council over the Question of Western Sahara is an injustice, more than 34 years after the adoption of Resolution 690 of 1991. The time for the holding of the UN Referendum on the Right to Self-Determination for the People of Saharawi, IS NOW!

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, which jointly constitute the Common African Position on the Reform of the UN Security

Council. We acknowledge the support from all interest groups for the Common African Position, which culminated in the recognition of Africa as a priority and special case in the Reform process, as reflected in the outcome documents of relevant United Nations Processes, including the Pact for the Future. We can no longer delay the urgent call to redress the historical injustice to Africa and address our call for equitable and balanced representation on the Security Council.

The Charter of the United Nations has laid the foundation for conditions necessary for peaceful co-existence and harmony among nations. Therefore, unilateral coercive measures should not be used as tools to undermine sovereign States for, this violates the Charter and its principles and purposes.

In this regard, we call for an end to the continued illegal economic, financial and commercial embargo imposed on the friendly people of Cuba and removing her from the list of states sponsoring terrorism. We call for an end to the illegal sanctions on Zimbabwe. We are also gravely concerned about the emerging threats against Venezuela, and call for the removal of sanctions and threats against that country.

Madam President,

The UN Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including East Jerusalem, has just released its findings that, indeed, a genocide is being committed against the Palestinian people. Despite the clear provisions of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and advisory opinions rendered by the International Court of Justice, the humanitarian situation in Gaza is worsening, and access to humanitarian aid is severely limited.

A failure to address the crisis in Gaza could become the moral failure that defines this era. We call on the UN Security Council to find consensus and help put an end to this longstanding conflict, between Israel and Palestine.

Namibia's history is one of untold suffering marked by Apartheid colonialism and genocide. It is our painful history that compels us to speak out, not out of bitterness, but conviction of the power of international solidarity. The unprecedented human suffering of the people of Palestine should question our human conscience. What we need is constructive dialogue to prevail. The people of Palestine must also benefit from the noble promises of the United Nations Charter.

The call for meaningful reform of the United Nations has never been more urgent. This reform necessitates democratizing global governance, amplifying marginalized voices, and ensuring international law is not a tool of convenience, but a shield for the most vulnerable.

Last year in September, the UN convened, the Summit for the Future, co-facilitated by Namibia and Germany. It adopted the Pact of the Future and its two Annexes namely; the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations. This marked a significant step in addressing peace, security, sustainable development, and climate change. The Pact challenged leaders and peoples of the world to renew commitments to multilateral cooperation, reminding us that our collective survival depends on unity.

As I conclude, I wish to reaffirm Namibia's commitment to its international obligations and the multilateral order. Respect for international law is not just a legal duty. It is a moral imperative. We must reaffirm our commitment to the principles that unite us: mutual respect, the peaceful resolution of disputes, and solidarity in the face of common challenges.

Let us remember that, even the smallest nations have a voice. When these voices are heard and heeded, durable peace and justice will prevail. We have an obligation to make this our moment, not of despair, but of renewal. We have the opportunity to restore hope, to build a future defined not by division, but by unity and preservation of human dignity.

I thank you.