

STATEMENT BY HON. JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE, MP., MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 TO THE 52ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, 22 September 1997

Mr. President,

Please permit me, at the outset, to offer my sincere congratulations to you, Excellency, on your election to the Presidency of the 52nd General Assembly. In the same vein, our congratulations are directed to the members of the Bureau on their election. I wish to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation in the discharge of this heavy responsibility entrusted upon you. I would also like to express my thanks to Ambassador Razali Ismail of Malaysia for the able manner in which he discharged his responsibilities during his Presidency of the last session. At this juncture, I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Kofi Annan for his deserved election as Secretary General of the United Nations and the able manner in which he is carrying out his responsibilities. Looking at its agenda, this is an historical meeting of the General Assembly and you, Mr. President, will be remembered for many years to come. Personally, I feel proud and privileged to be associated with this meeting.

Last year, here in New York, members of the Group of 77 and China elected my country, Tanzania, to the Chairmanship of the Group. The last nine months or so on that Chair has been a very exciting and challenging experience for me and my colleagues at our Mission to the United Nations and the entire Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. We have been involved in several meetings, debates and negotiations on behalf of the Group. I am glad to say that, despite some setbacks, notable success and progress has been made in all our endeavours. All this, Mr. President, has been made possible through the cooperation, support and, above all, team-work of all members of the Group. We thank all members for their support.

Mr. President,

Two years ago, world leaders met here to celebrate 50 years of the United Nations' existence. Besides taking stock of the progress made and the lessons learned, the Heads of State and Government endeavoured to chart out the institutional framework and operational parameters that could enhance the Organisation's relevance and effectiveness in a changed international environment. In this context, apart from its traditional roles of maintaining international peace and security, as well as providing humanitarian assistance, it was also found essential to place development cooperation issues at the centre of the United Nations' activities. The United Nations itself needed to undertake appropriate reform measures so that it is better able to deal with the challenges of the new global economy.

To facilitate the reform process in the socio-economic field, developing countries participated actively and effectively in the Agenda for Development to ensure the successful conclusion of the negotiations of this important process. These negotiations were completed in June 1997 and I should like to commend the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group of the General Assembly on this issue for its good work.

Building on the outcome of recent United Nations' conferences and other relevant agreements, the Agenda for Development underscores that sustained economic growth is essential to the economic and social development of all countries, in particular developing countries. While acknowledging the importance of national policy and measures in the development process, the Agenda for Development calls for action towards a dynamic and enabling international economic environment, including such aspects as an open, rule-based, equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system and

promotion of investment and transfer of technology and knowledge. Additionally, the Agenda calls for enhanced international cooperation in the mobilization and provision of financial for development. It also underscores the need for an effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable solution to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries.

Mr. President,

Many developing countries are not able to benefit from the twin processes of liberalization and globalization of the world economy. These processes benefit some countries while causing instability and marginalisation in others particularly in developing countries. The least developed countries face the greatest risk of further marginalization. This is why they continue to demand that such uneven trends be addressed, and that the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other related international organizations adopt specific and concrete measures to mitigate the adverse effects arising from the implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreements. These measures must include long-term financial and technical support, the transfer of technology, and the improvement of the trade performance of developing countries. It is also necessary to ensure full and effective participation of the developing countries in the international economic decision-making processes.

Concerning financial flows, it is imperative to reverse the overall decline in ODA and to achieve the agreed target of 0.7% by the turn of the century. We appeal to developed countries to reaffirm their commitments to fulfil this target promptly. Other sources of concessional external financial assistance should also be strengthened to enable them to increase resources for disbursement without conditionalities in support of the developing countries.

In addition to ODA and multilateral assistance, the growth in the Foreign Direct Investment in developing countries is of particular importance. However, FDI portfolio flows are going to very few developing countries that are already growing fast, and virtually none is going to the least developed countries. For example, Africa has received only a small proportion of the total net private flows despite extensive reforms that continue to be undertaken. The challenge to the international community in this respect is to ensure that adequate capital and investment flows also reach least developed countries so as to accelerate their pace of development. This could be done through, inter alia, the improvement of economic and social infrastructure in the Least Developed Countries.

External indebtedness is one of the major obstacles to the development efforts of many developing countries. It is acknowledged that even with sound economic policies and the full appreciation of the debt-rescheduling arrangements in place, developing countries continue to face an unbearable debt-servicing burden. There is, hence, an urgent need for adopting durable solutions to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of particularly highly indebted poor countries. More also needs to be done in terms of debt stock cancellation and forgiveness. We appreciate recent initiatives to reduce debts, both within the "Naples Terms" of the Paris Club, as well as those within the multilateral framework such as the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative of the World Bank and IMP. the criteria for eligibility should be more flexible to enable more countries to benefit from these arrangements. As it is now, it is almost a nightmare for a country to qualify in terms of conditionalities involved and time it takes before reaping the first benefits after qualifying. It is like being so near yet so far!

Mr. President,

The debate on development is closely interlinked with the environment. In June 1997, a special session of this Assembly was held to review and appraise the implementation of Agenda 21 five years on. It is regrettable that the UNGASS came out with no concrete agreement or commitments on the cross-cutting issues of financial resources and technology transfer. For while it was possible to agree on the follow-up action on some of the sectoral issues such as forests, energy, climate change, desertification, freshwater, and

others, lack of concrete agreement on issues related to financial resources and technology transfer militates against effective realization of the little that was agreed upon.

In his statement at the UNGASS, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, my President, H.E. Benjamin W. Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania, emphasized that all countries should rededicate themselves to the Rio Declaration in order to achieve the goals of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. He further stressed the need for creating a more conducive international economic environment to enable developing countries access to new and additional resources and technology on concessional and grant terms. I wish to reiterate that call today.

Other major international conferences and world summits held since 1990 will also come up for review in the near future. It is our hope that a new spirit of international partnership in resolving the various socio-economic problems facing particularly developing countries, will emerge and that international support for the implementation of the various programmes in these conferences will continue to be provided by the international community.

Mr. President,

In recent years, South-South cooperation has evolved into an important modality for addressing the development needs of developing countries.

We are convinced that South-South cooperation provides a sound basis in promoting economic growth and increasing technical capacities for acceleration of development in the developing countries. The Group of 77 and China pledges to intensify the existing cooperation and solidarity among its members with a view to sharing development experiences and solving some of the development problems facing them.

Mr. President,

I agree with the Secretary General that reform of the United Nations is not an event but a process. General Assembly Resolution 50/227 and the Secretary General's proposals provide a basis for the discussion of United Nations' reforms. However, we strongly feel that, emphasis should be given to the overall policy thrust and mission of the Organisation geared towards the strengthening of its economic role. Furthermore, institutions that deal with economic issues such as UNCTAD, UNIDO and the relevant ECOSOC bodies and regional commissions should remain.

They should also be strengthened to ensure that the development concerns of developing countries are taken fully into account.

As for the reform of the Security Council, my country stands for more democratization and equity in this crucial organization. We stand for the expansion of its membership, both in the permanent and non-permanent categories, with the additional members in the permanent category getting Veto Powers. The expansion in both categories should not only include Japan and Germany, but also equitable representation of the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

All reforms must be conducive to realizing the broad purposes and principles of the Charter and to improving the efficiency of the United Nations in all areas. They must also contribute to a more positive and effective United Nations role in promoting world peace and development and meet the aspirations of developing countries. I am confident that we will be able to achieve a broad consensus as long as all of us engage in the deliberations in good faith and with a readiness to consider all legitimate concerns.

Mr. President,

Tanzania appreciates the changes that have taken place in the area of disarmament. The threat of nuclear war may not at present manifest itself in ideological confrontation of the past, but it has not gone away or receded. It is still with us and we should guard against any complacency that we are any safer today. Nations still possess nuclear warheads and new generations of these weapons are being manufactured. The total elimination of these weapons must continue to be the central purpose of our disarmament agenda.

While nuclear weapons still pose grave threat to international peace and security, conventional ones have had a devastating effect, particularly in areas with conflict. Amongst these are the anti-personnel landmines which maim and kill the innocent even long after war has ended. The effects of these weapons are evident all over the world with their most violent manifestation in countries like Angola, Cambodia, Mozambique and Bosnia. Tanzania has, and will continue to support, a world-wide ban of these weapons through the framework of the Ottawa Process, and looks forward to becoming party to the instrument just concluded in Oslo, Norway. We do at the same time, hope that the elimination of anti-personnel landmines will not be seen as an end in itself, but as part of the overall objective of eliminating other weapons, especially weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. President,

As the United Nations grapples with the challenges of peace and development, it is still faced with the many political problems which need urgent resolution if humanity is to prosper.

From Latin America and the Caribbean to Europe, Asia to Middle East and Africa, the United Nations is faced with an arduous task of promoting peace, democracy and good governance as the enduring pillars of development.

Mr. President,

We congratulate the people of Liberia for having conducted a successful democratic election which, we hope, has ushered in a new era of peace in the country. Now as they seek to regain their feet and begin on the arduous task of national reconciliation, healing and economic reconstruction, they will need the support of the international community.

At a time when Liberia emerges from destruction and suffering, we are deeply concerned that Sierra Leone is sinking deeper into chaos at the expense of peace, development and democracy for the country. The Government of Tanzania has associated itself fully with the efforts within the framework of the OAU and ECOWAS to restore democracy and constitutional rule in Sierra Leone. Even at this late hour, we continue to hope that the Sierra Leonean Military will realize the folly of their misadventure and agree to the return of their country to constitutional rule. In the meantime, the continuing efforts of the West African region, and Africa generally, merit expanded support so as to put an end to the destructive cycle of military coups in Sierra Leone.

In Angola, we continue to be concerned by the maneuvers of UNITA to stall the process of implementation of the Lusaka Accords. Our concern is given added urgency by the steady degeneration of the situation in the country and the likelihood of a return to open hostilities and war with all the destruction and suffering it portends to the people of that country. We urge UNITA to abandon its obstructionist policies and abide by the Lusaka Peace Accords. We do hope the United Nations will remain engaged in Angola.

Mr. President,

The situation in the Great Lakes Region remains precarious. The consequences of decades of misrule in some countries of the region have been horrendous in terms of the suffering, war, death and lost opportunities to harness its great development potential. We regret that the situation in Burundi shows no sign of

improvement. The military authorities have persisted in frustrating the efforts of the region within the framework of the Arusha Initiative, under the Chairmanship of Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, to facilitate the process of political dialogue.

Tanzania, and the other countries of the region, persist in these efforts, because we believe there is no alternative to dialogue but war and more suffering to the innocent civilians. The region has no other interest in Burundi but to help. At the regional summit meeting in Dar es Salaam on the 4th of this month, the leaders of the region reiterated their commitment to this search for peace in Burundi and called upon the military authorities there to abandon the course of confrontation and seek dialogue and political accommodation with all elements in Burundi.

The region has been categorical in restating that the Burundi authorities should be under no illusion that they can bury their heads in the sand or wish the problem away. They simply have to face the reality and dutifully rise to the occasion. Certainly the region and the international community cannot leave them alone and allow them to lead the country into self- destruction and war with all the attendant problems it creates to Burundi and her neighbours. I wish, Mr. President, to appeal to the international community to continue assisting the region so that our goal of restarting dialogue for peace in the country is achieved.

In Rwanda, gladly, the situation is steadily stabilizing, particularly after the return of most of her citizens who had been coerced into a drifting life in exile as refugees. Yet the difficulties which face that country are enormous. The process of recovery from the immense moral, physical and spiritual effects of the 1994 genocide, will be painful and slow. As Rwanda struggles to come to terms with the genocide, reconcile with itself, and continue on the path of national healing and renewal, it needs our solidarity and support.

With the assumption of President Laurent Kabila to the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the process of returning to democratic rule has begun, albeit slowly. We realize, it will not be an easy or swift process given the political rigidity and policies of political exclusion to which the country was subjected for decades. We appreciate the enormity of the task of putting the country back to good footing, of restoring the institutions of government, and setting out to democratic recovery. Given this background, what the government and people of the Democratic Republic of Congo need the most is solidarity, understanding and material support from the international community.

The political problems of the Great Lakes have precipitated a grave humanitarian challenge as millions of people have been forced into a life of exile as refugees. This has placed an enormous burden to the countries of the region, including my own, which has had to shoulder it without commensurate resources. We appreciate the great work done by UN agencies and many humanitarian non-governmental organizations in terms of providing the much-needed assistance to the refugees. Indeed without this support, the life of the refugees would have been most unbearable. Yet even with this much appreciated assistance, the burden left to refugee receiving states has been enormous. The economic, social, environmental and security consequences of hosting the refugees will have long lasting effects which these countries will continue to suffer from even after repatriation of the refugees has been completed. This raises fundamental issue of assisting the asylum countries, to not only cope with the immediate task of meeting the needs of the refugees, but also with the long-term effects of hosting them. This aspect needs addressing.

Mr. President,

Somalia may no longer be on our television screens or worthy of the news headlines, but it is still a problem which must not be forgotten. The country is still fragmented and fighting amongst the conflicting factions is not yet over. There is a chance that through the Sodore Initiative, there may be some positive developments. The United Nations needs to continue associating itself closely with the efforts being expended by IGAD and the OAU aimed at bringing durable peace to Somalia.

In Western Sahara too we are concerned by the apparent freeze in the implementation of the Settlement Plan. As we reiterate our solidarity with Polisario, we express the hope that the initiatives of the representative of the Secretary General, in the person of former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, will bear fruit and remove the prevailing political difficulties in the implementation of the Settlement Plan.

Tanzania continues to follow very closely the developments in the Middle East which now threaten peace in the area. In this regard, Tanzania reiterates its solidarity with the Palestinian people and calls upon the Palestinian and Israeli authorities to persist in efforts at consolidating dialogue and moving forward in elaborating permanent arrangements for peace. We still believe that ultimately, enduring peace in the region lies in the return of all the occupied Arab land and the full enjoyment by the Palestinian people of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, including the establishment of a homeland for themselves within internationally recognised boundaries.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, as we move into the new millennium, the world is still a place largely besieged by poverty and underdevelopment, conflict and war. The giant leaps of science and technology which have enabled humankind to explore outer space and to shrink the world into a global village, have so far not been adequately and evenly channelled into meeting the compelling needs of the greater part of humanity. The world will transit into the next millenium divided among those who are prosperous and at peace, and those living in abject poverty and at war. Therefore, it must be the overriding objective of the United Nations to ensure that this disparity is overcome.

The challenge that we must all face is to strengthen this Organisation by unconditionally supporting it fully, politically and financially, to enable it serve humanity better.

I thank you.

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77