



UGANDA

Permanent Mission of Uganda
to the United Nations
New York

Tel: (212) 949-0110
Fax: (212) 687-4517

STATEMENT BY

HON. TOM R. BUTIME

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
(INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS)
ALSO HOLDING THE PORTFOLIO OF THE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF
THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

**TO THE
59th SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York
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Statement by Hon. Tom R. Butime, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (International Affairs) also Holding the Portfolio of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda to the 59th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, September 28, 2004

Mr. President,
Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of my delegation, the people of Uganda, and on my own behalf, I would like to congratulate the President, Mr. Jean Ping from the sister African Republic of Gabon, upon his election to preside over the 59th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I have confidence in his stewardship of the Session to a successful conclusion.

I thank the Secretary-General for his excellent leadership especially during these trying times for the United Nations.

I note with satisfaction that after a year in which the centrality of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security had come under serious challenge, there seems to be a return to the more widely accepted multilateral approach to resolving global challenges.

Mr. President,

Terrorism continues to be one of the biggest threats to international peace and security. Since September 11, 2001, thousands of innocent people, including women and children have been killed or maimed as a result of indiscriminate terrorist acts. This year, the world has witnessed many innocent civilians massacred in cold blood, hostages beheaded in the most barbaric manner, children mutilated by suicide bombers and terrorist groups, very often in the name of extremist and misguided causes and ideologies. Whether it is the recent appalling attack on school children in the Russian town of Beslan, or the massacre of civilians in Balonyo, Northern Uganda, the intention of terrorists is the same: to undermine and divide our societies, overthrow elected governments, and to strike at the heart of international peace and stability.

The Uganda delegation condemns these terrorist acts in the strongest terms. We do not accept that any cause, however genuine, warrants the indiscriminate destruction of human life or property.

Uganda, therefore, strongly supports the call for enhanced efforts by the international community to build a stronger, global and sustained anti-terrorist coalition. We must commit ourselves to implementation of UNSC Resolution 1373 and related anti-terrorism conventions to ensure that every country takes necessary measures against

financing, harbouring or supporting terrorist organisations. The international community must work against those who preach and promote hate propaganda based on religion, colour, tribe or race. Starting from the principle that no one should be above the law, Uganda believes that the ICC must ensure that those who perpetrate terrorist acts against innocent civilians are adequately punished.

Uganda calls upon the international community to assist the developing countries in the acquisition and development of the necessary capacity to fight international terrorism.

Mr. President,

In Uganda, we have been fighting against a terrorist organization known as the “Lord’s Resistance Army”, based in southern Sudan, which has killed, maimed and abducted tens of thousands of Ugandans in Northern Uganda. The acts of plunder and destruction by these criminals have laid to waste entire villages and driven helpless villagers into internally displaced persons camps. The Uganda Government is sparing no effort, with the co-operation of the Government of Sudan, to end this situation and restore peace and stability in this area. We are confident that soon the remnants of these terrorists will have been eliminated or captured. Despite the Amnesty legislation and a standing offer of pardon, very few have responded. However, of recent some improvement in reporting has been registered.

Government has drawn up a comprehensive Post-conflict Rehabilitation and Development Program for Northern Uganda and appeals to our international development partners to support the program, whose short-term components include: (a) resettlement of internally-displaced persons (IDPs), (b) rehabilitation of basic infrastructure, schools and health centers, (c) disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and resettlement of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) combatants who have surrendered as well as the abducted children/youths who have been rescued by the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF).

Mr. President,

The situation in Iraq continues to create very grave challenges in the global efforts in the fight against international terrorism, given the involvement of the al-Qaeda related terrorist groups. Uganda welcomes the recent restoration of sovereignty to the Iraqi people. We call upon the UN, in particular, and the international community as a whole, to do everything possible to assist the interim government in the rehabilitation of Iraq and re-establishment of the physical and political infrastructure to allow the holding of the scheduled elections in that country.

Mr. President,

The conflict between Israel and Palestine, often driven by rigid positions, continues to pose a serious threat to peace and stability in the Middle East. Uganda

supports the Quartet-led roadmap for a comprehensive peaceful settlement in the Middle East. We support the establishment of a Palestinian state existing side-by-side and in peace with Israel within secure and recognised borders in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

We call upon our Israel and Palestinian brothers to return to the negotiating table and end the cycle of violence, which has caused needless loss of lives. After more than 50 years of violence and bloodshed, both the Israelis and Palestinians need a break. New creative approaches to a comprehensive peace should therefore be sought for the sake of their peoples. Every year every time, we pass resolutions which remain on mere paper. Resolutions are not solutions in themselves. It is high time we engaged constructively in the serious search for a solution, for the future of humanity and the Middle East.

Mr. President,

Turning to the Great Lakes Region, we note with satisfaction the positive developments with regard to the peace processes in the various conflict situations. In Burundi the transitional government has been consolidated with almost all the fighting groups subscribing to the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement. We call upon the groups still remaining outside the peace settlement to cease their military operations and join the peace process. We congratulate the African Peace Mission for its contribution to the Peace process. We welcome the deployment of United Nations Peacekeepers to Burundi. Election dates may change, but the elections must be held sooner or later. Elections, new Government and good representation propositions – all must be for peace for Burundi. It is, therefore, important that the international community extends the necessary assistance towards consolidation of peace, stability, rehabilitation and development of a stable Burundi.

Mr. President,

Uganda remains committed to supporting the peace process in the DRC. We urge all parties in the Government of National Unity in Kinshasa to remain committed to the Pretoria peace accords and to resist any temptation to resume hostilities. We also call upon the UN Security Council to strengthen MONUC under Chapter VII to consolidate its peacekeeping operations. A robust MONUC force would be critical for the enforcement of UNSC Resolution 1493 (2003) on the arms embargo against militias, as well as the disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation, resettlement and re-integration (DDRRR) of all armed rebel groups and militias operating on the territory of the DRC. This would also serve to reduce, and hopefully to eliminate, inter-ethnic clashes in Eastern DRC and help to re-assure neighbouring countries of cross-boarder security. It may also be important to include other legitimate groups in the Government of National Unity in the DRC. This may enhance peace. Before democratic elections, it is important, to create consensus for peace and security.

Mr. President,

Uganda believes that as a result of the positive achievements in the peace processes in Burundi and the DRC, there is an urgent need to convene the international conference on the Great Lakes Region under the auspices of the UN and the AU. The conference, which is schedule to take place in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, in November 2004 will bring together a core group of the Great Lakes countries and those neighbouring countries affected by the conflicts or those that by affecting, contribute to the conflict.

We hope that in order to consolidate the peace efforts, the Great Lakes regional conference will involve all stakeholders in developing a strategic plan of action on the key issues including regional peace and security, development, post-conflict reconstruction, and regional integration in the context of NEPAD. I am glad to note that countries of the Great Lakes Region, including Uganda, have already embarked on a preparatory process for the conference involving the youth and women groups, NGOs and local government officials from all border districts. We believe that this inclusive process will ensure national ownership and commitment to implementation of the recommendations of the international conference on the Great Lakes Region.

Mr. President,

The Uganda delegation welcomes the peace accords recently signed in Nairobi between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). We hope that these Accords will lead to the end of the long running conflict which has caused untold suffering to the people of Southern Sudan, and led to insecurity in neighbouring countries particularly my own, Uganda. With the return of peace and stability in southern Sudan, we are confident that we will be able to bring to an end the Lord's Resistance Army attacks against our people in Northern Uganda.

Mr President,

On Somalia, my country is an active participant in the IGAD initiative which has brought together the various factions in Somalia to a negotiating table to end the conflict in their country. We note with great satisfaction the progress that has been made. We salute the people of Somalia for coming together to establish a Parliament embracing all groups. We also wish to thank the friends of Somalia in particular, and the international community in general, for their generous support for the Somali peace process. We call upon them to continue the support not only for the peace process but also for the post-conflict disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation, resettlement and re-integration (DDRRR) as well as development phases.

Mr. President,

In 2005, the UN will mark the 5th Anniversary of the Millennium Summit, which embodied our political will and commitment to a number of Millennium Development

Goals (MDGs) in order to reduce poverty by 50% by 2015. It is, therefore, of grave concern that in many parts of Africa, poverty levels are rising as per capita incomes continue to decline, infant and maternal mortality rates are on the increase, while official development assistance commitments remain unfulfilled.

In order to make positive progress on meeting the MDGs and ensuring equitable sharing of benefits from globalization, the UN General Assembly should focus on, inter alia:

- (a) Effective follow-up and implementation of the various plans of action, declarations and strategies relating to the Monterrey Consensus on financing for development; the Johannesburg Plan of Action on sustainable development; the Brussels Programme of Action on Least Developed Countries and the Almaty Programme of Action on Land-locked Developing Countries.
- (b) Restructuring of the global trading system especially in agriculture, Mode IV trade in services, and increasing value-added export products from the developing countries.
- (c) Mobilization of adequate resources to fight malaria, TB and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, covering prevention, care and Research & Development to ensure the provision of cheaper and more effective drugs and possibly the discovery of an anti-HIV/AIDS vaccine.
- (d) Strengthening South-South Cooperation, including measures by the more advanced developing countries to open markets to products from the Least Developed countries.
- (e) Stronger international support for NEPAD, which reflects Africa's priorities to address development, governance, and security challenges facing the continent. Critical support areas will include market access, measures to encourage increased foreign direct investment to African countries, higher ODA levels for infrastructure and human resources development; ensuring sustainable debt levels; regional integration; enhancement of the AU capacity to deal with conflict situations and implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism.

Mr. President,

As the UN looks to its 60th birthday in 2005, the need for revitalization of the General Assembly and restructuring of the UN Security Council has never been greater. The need for the reform of the UN is imperative, if we want to enhance the role of the organization and the effectiveness of multilateralism to address emerging hard threats such as terrorism, WMD, and genocide as well as soft challenges such as persistent poverty and HIV/AIDS. It is, therefore, fitting that the report of the High-level Panel on Threats and Challenges to the UN will be discussed in 2005.

With regard to the reform of the UN Security Council, the restructuring should reflect the need for democratization, and ensuring a balanced and equitable geographical representation. We believe that Africa should be allocated no less than two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats in the expanded Security Council.

In summary, Uganda has called for stronger collective action against international terrorism and support for the post-conflict rehabilitation and development programme in northern Uganda. We have noted the positive developments in the Great Lakes Region, and stressed the importance of convening the International Conference on the Great Lakes in Dar-es-Salaam in November, 2004. We have highlighted the significance of 2005 as the 60th birthday of the UN and 5th anniversary of the Millennium Summit in focusing on meeting the MDGs and revitalization and restructuring of the UN to enhance the role of the organization and to ensure the effectiveness of collective multilateral action.

I thank you.