



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA TO
THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT
BY

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At the 62nd Session of the
General Assembly of the United Nations

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Please check against delivery

Mr. President;

Your Majesties;

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government;

Your Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

May I start by expressing to you, Mr. President, my Government's congratulations on your election as the President of the 62nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Let me also use this occasion to thank the outgoing President, Her Excellency Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, for the excellent manner in which she presided over the 61st Session of the General Assembly.

Every year the UN General Assembly provides the world's leaders with an excellent opportunity to focus our attention on the challenges we commonly face. While some of the challenges can be addressed nationally, the most critical are often not confined to national borders, and therefore require a concerted global effort. Hence the centrality of the UN in providing the leadership and platform to address global challenges.

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

That is why it is vital that the UN continues to undergo comprehensive reforms to render it more versatile, effective and efficient. As the Secretary General correctly observed in his report on this subject, the UN “is not optimally configured”.

Some of the ongoing reforms such as the implementation of ‘one program, one budgetary framework, and one office’ at country level is a good start for rendering this international body more responsive. We are pleased that Rwanda was selected as one of the first eight pilot countries for this reform.

In the same context of the ongoing reforms, the proposal to restructure the gender portfolio is most welcome. We agree with the findings of the High-level Panel that the UN’s contributions to gender issues have been incoherent, under-resourced and fragmented. The proposed reforms will assist in overcoming these shortcomings.

We however still eagerly await the reform of the United Nations Security Council to render it more representative of the world community and more transparent in its operations and decision-making processes. We believe this would equip the UN with greater legitimacy and capacity to maintain world peace and security.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Let me briefly touch on a number of pressing challenges the global community currently faces. While our continent has been consolidating peace and security, there are persistent problem areas that need attention. Today, in the Great Lakes Region, forces that committed genocide in Rwanda in 1994 continue their destructive operations. Almost fourteen years after their deeds in our country, they are still sowing mayhem in the region – they rape, murder, terrorize and plunder with impunity. Their leaders are active in Europe, America, and Africa where they continue to promote the ideology of genocide. There can be no doubt that these terror groups constitute a threat to international peace and security. The presence of the costly United Nations Peace Keeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has not diminished their activities.

I once again call upon the International Community, in collaboration with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to end the threat posed by these negative forces once and for all. Rwandans and the region as a whole need peace and stability so that we can concentrate on the business of economic growth and development.

On our part, we pledge renewed commitment to making our contribution to the restoration of peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region and in other parts of our continent. In this respect, we express our solidarity with the long-suffering people of Darfur, and commit ourselves to contributing to peace efforts in this part of the world in close co-operation with the Government of the Sudan, the

African Union, and the United Nations. Rwanda welcomes the UN Security Council Resolution 1769 authorizing the creation of the UN-AU hybrid peace-keeping force in Darfur, and calls for its speedy deployment.

In the same spirit we urge the International Community to support peace-building efforts in Somalia. It is critical that resources are urgently availed to enable the deployment of the pledged peace-keeping forces by African countries.

Excellencies;

Through the United Nations, we express our collective determination to promote socioeconomic transformation for greater and more rapid wealth-creation that in turn permits improved lives. This challenge remains daunting in the developing world where extreme poverty still affects millions of people.

The solutions include increased productive capacities on the part of the developing world, side by side with the opening of global markets by the developed world to permit greater trade and investment. A fair global trading system is central to wealth-creation. Improving the quality of development aid would supplement this effort based on a shared understanding that aid is most effective when it is aligned with national development priorities.

Our ultimate goal of improving lives globally cannot be realized if the challenge of climate change and the associated widespread environmental degradation is not sufficiently tackled. Rwanda appreciates the convening of the high-level meeting on climate change by the UN Secretary General which took place earlier this week. We also look forward to the UN Climate Change Conference scheduled to take place in Bali, Indonesia this December – which should provide a clear roadmap of how we are to consolidate our gains and gather pace in protecting our environment.

Mr. President;

The global challenges of poverty, ignorance, terrorism, conflict and climate change require us to act collectively in a manner that the founders of this organization captured eloquently in the words “We the Peoples of the United Nations.” As we begin this 62nd Session of the General Assembly, let us recommit to our common aspirations and responsibilities for realizing peace, prosperity, and freedom above any narrow interests. Only then can we hope to realize the ideals contained in the Charter of the United Nations, “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,” and to “promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.”

Mr. President, I thank you very much.