

República Democrática de S. Tomé e Príncipe

PERMANENT MISSION OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

400 Park Avenue 7111 Floor New York NY 10022

e-mail: stp1@attglobal.net Tel.: (212) 317-0533 Fax: (212) 3174580

STATEMENT

BY

H. E.

FRADIQUE DE MENEZES

PRESIDENT OF DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

OF

SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

AT THE

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING OF
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

14 SEPTEMBER 2005
NEW YORK

Mr President,

Mr. Secretary General,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a privilege for me to be involved in this High-Level Plenary Meeting, where five years ago the Member States adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

At this time when we are commemorating the Sixtieth Anniversary of the UN, we are unanimous in recognizing that international society has undergone many varied changes which make it very different from the one that existed in the far-off year of 1945, which makes the need for a consequent adaptation and revitalization of this organization more than evident.

It's never too much to emphasize the new challenges and threats that mankind is confronted with, specifically infectious diseases, the degradation of the environment, natural disasters, international organized crime, corruption, the proliferation of all types of weapons, terrorism, constant violations of human rights, and others.

The fundamental purpose for the establishment of the United Nations in 1945 was to prevent the horrors of the World War and all their consequences.

Today we must all recognize that, despite the significant changes in the international political scene, we continue to live under permanent and persistent evidence of new threats, against which we must adopt a more vigorous and interventionist position to prevent excesses that could jeopardize the survival of mankind and of nature itself.

Therefore, we must, now more than ever, choose multilateralism as the basis of our action for international security, sustainable development, and solidarity.

As an example of the success of multilateralism, we can point out the efforts of the international community, through the United Nations, which lead to the creation of the Democratic Republic of East Timor, and very recently the response to the natural disasters (tsunami) that affected Asia and Africa. This only became possible thanks to coordinated international solidarity and joint action, and not as a result of individual action or initiatives.

As a small, developing island state, Sao Tome e Principe also supports the preventive measure that consists in the establishment of an early-warning tsunami coordination center under the auspices of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

The eradication of hunger and extreme poverty, universal primary education, fostering gender equality, guarantying environmental sustainability, the development of global partnerships, a reduction in infant mortality, improvement of the health of mothers and babies, fighting HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, malaria, are questions that required collective work and, therefore, constitute a tremendous challenge for all of us.

In terms of the Millennium Objectives, we are all aware of them, they are ambitious, but they constitute a reachable goal if there is political will on the part of the member states, coupled with making the required financial resources available. Therefore, words and promises must be transformed into concrete actions.

My country would like to congratulate the International Conference on the Review of the Barbados Program of Action, which was held in Port-Louis (Mauritius Islands) from January 10 to 14 of this year, during which the International Community reaffirmed its engagement in the sustained development of small island states, based on the internationally-agreed upon objectives, including the Millennium objectives. It is my firm conviction that this manifest political will will translate into concrete actions.

Aware of our responsibilities and the need to create conditions and an environment for meeting the Millennium Objectives, my country adopted a strategic plan to reduce poverty, whose implementation has had the participation of its principal development partners from whom we request continued support, and without which our economic indicators will continue to deteriorate.

And the situation is not different throughout the African continent! We continue to view with concern that nearly half the sub-Saharan African population lives on less than one dollar per day, nearly one in five children dies before reaching five years of age, and one-third of the population faces hunger and misery.

In sum, the social indicators of the African continent are at such low levels that they may prevent our reaching the approved goal for the year 2015.

Mr. President,

The report on the Millennium Objectives confirms that developed countries can do more than just prevent hunger, poverty, and illness in the world. Only five donor countries met the commitment to dedicate 0.7% of their gross domestic product to development aid.

We would like and we hope that as planned, there will be an increase from 0.25% in 2003 to 0.44% in 2006, and to 0.54% in 2015, so as to support the Millennium objectives - and certainly there will be a tremendous difference in low-income countries.

Mr. President,

Human security implies collective security and collective development. We cannot, in my opinion, present action plans for their interconnection without first studying the interactions between them.

The persistence of armed conflicts, the spreading of HIV/AIDS, malaria, the absence of good government and transparency, and the violation of human rights, which we see frequently in some parts of the world, constitute serious obstacles to the development process of States. These matters require a more dynamic approach, and we are convinced that reforming the United Nations may be the best route, involving the full participation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Before presenting my points of view on the question of reforming the United Nations, allow me to make some comments on the Report of the Commission for Africa, an initiative of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr. Tony Blair. This initiative, including the recommendations for African governments, are welcome, and I hope

that all members of the GB endorse them and work toward their implementation.

Just as it has done with the Millennium and Mauritius Statements on the Development of Small Insular States, Sao Tome e Principe will do everything to ensure that the recommendations that come out of the Commission for Africa are followed.

My country is counting on your support and generosity.

Furthermore, I would like to thank very especially the American government for the support it has given to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome e Principe for it to become part of the Millennium Account. Important steps have already been taken and we are of the belief that we will be able to benefit from the first concrete support from the Millennium account very soon.

Mr. President,

There is no doubt that since its creation to the present, our organization, through the different bodies and agencies, particularly the Security Council, was a determinant factor for peace, for conflict resolution, and humanitarian aid. But we must also recognize that our action often did not have the expected effects, specifically with respect to the post-conflict period.

Indeed, if we analyze the different conflict situations, particularly in Africa, whose resolution was only possible thanks to the intervention of the UN, we are forced to note that in several cases, the political solution to the conflict was not sufficiently followed up, leaving serious social and economic situations unresolved, with very often dramatic effects on the population.

Within this framework we believe that an Economic Recovery Plan should be established, whose objectives would be, specifically, the protection of democracy, the rights of minorities and of the direct victims of conflicts and the establishment of institutions which involve civilian society, the private sector, and that define standards for the management of natural resources.

Sao Tome e Principe supports the idea of establishing a Commission for Peace whose function would be to help in conflict prevention. Likewise, we support the idea of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts, and to keep the peace. In the case of Africa this reinforcement of cooperation with the specialized bodies of the African Union will specifically allow for the training of resources in this area.

The risk of proliferation of chemical and biological weapons must be of concern to all. The member states must reaffirm their engagement with respect to the Nuclear Weapons Nonproliferation Treaty.

The establishment of a nuclear-weapon free zone must be an objective to be reached, for which we hope the other regions of the world will join with Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean in this initiative.

Terrorism, one of the great evils of our time, must be fought vigorously by establishing mechanisms within the framework of the United Nations, to attack it at its root and prevent it from spreading. Therefore, especial attention must be given to certain regions that are short on resources but whose action in the global war on terrorism could be a decisive factor.

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary General,

Your Excellencies,

Our commitment to peace and international development falls within the principles of the United Nations Charter. Within this context, we must act together with a view toward facing new threats and to ensure that all the development objectives for the Millennium are met by 2015.

This is why we are convinced that reforming the United Nations is necessary. The Security Council, ECOSOC, the human rights commission and the secretariat must be reformed to respond to the new challenges that are facing the world.

The desired reform of our organization should not neglect the need to confer upon the UN its true universal nature, such that all nations of the world are represented, which fact has not yet occurred with respect to the 23 million inhabitants of Taiwan.

This is what we wish to state here.
Best wishes to the United Nations.
Thank you very much.
