



*Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zimbabwe  
to the United Nations*

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT R. G. MUGABE**

**TO THE**

**HIGH LEVEL PLENARY MEETING OF THE**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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**Check against Delivery**

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Your Excellency the Chairman of the High-Level Meeting of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,  
Your Majesties,  
Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,  
Your Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations,  
Mr Kofi Annan,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Let me begin by **congratulating you and your co-Chairperson for accepting the onerous task of presiding over this epochal event, an event that we all hope will have a positive impact on the lives of many of the citizens of the world. I am confident that your able leadership will successfully carry us through this Session.**

Five years ago, we met here in New York at the Millennium Summit and agreed on 8 development goals (MDGs) that we believed **were realistic and achievable. We were hopeful that, all things being equal, we would be able to meet the targets we set for ourselves in order to achieve those goals.**

It is now for us to review the progress we have made in implementing the **Millennium Declaration. Regrettably, for many developing countries, including Zimbabwe, all things have not been equal. Our national progress report, launched recently, shows that our efforts have been seriously affected by recurrent droughts and floods, HIV and AIDS and unilateral sanctions imposed on us by countries that do not wish us well. As a result, we are lagging behind on many of our targets. While the challenges are great, so is our commitment to achieving our MDGs even with our limited means. Our achievements in the area of universal primary education are a testimony to this resolve. We have also committed ourselves to addressing extreme poverty and hunger by redistributing land to the majority of our citizens who had been condemned to conditions of squalor by years of colonialism and its vestiges.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

In reviewing the progress made towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), we **must have the courage to go beyond the mere posturing that is characterised** by name-calling, finger-pointing and

**false accusations. Developing countries should be accorded policy space to develop their own strategies tailored to their developmental needs within a framework** which provides for accountability, transparency and integrity in the system. Development cannot proceed in the context of **ideological rigidities and models which are not applicable to diverse conditions** and circumstances *as* they exist in developing countries. That is why it is so important that in global economic governance and the shaping of policies affecting international economic relations, it is important to ensure the existence of an inclusive process of decision-making in which developing countries can play a meaningful role. **The simple fact is that every government has the primary responsibility to promote and safeguard the economic and social development of its people. International efforts should only complement that** of national programmes.

**Mr. Chairman,**

**The main challenges facing the attainment of the MDGs has not been the strategies and objectives as defined but rather lies within the degree on implementation.** Not enough has been done to fulfil the commitments undertaken in the various **UN Conferences and Summits. We are therefore concerned about the continuous, significant and clearly calculated, decline in** the Official Development Assistance (ODA) in recent years and reiterate the urgent need for a substantial increase of **ODA as agreed at Monterrey, Mexico.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

As we deliberate on the institutional reform of the United Nations, let us do so in a **manner that is open, transparent and consultative, and that will deepen and consolidate multilateralism.** Let us seek to secure the world by **addressing the root cause of the present insecurity, which are to be found in poverty, hunger and** disease on the one hand, and intolerance, double standards, xenophobia, selectivity and self-righteousness in our approach to issues on the other. A reformed **United Nations should be one that plays a key role in coordinating developmental issues. The vision that we must present for a future United Nations should not be one filled with** vague concepts that provide an opportunity for those states that seek to interfere in the internal affairs of other states. Concepts such as "humanitarian intervention" and the "responsibility to protect" **need careful scrutiny in order to test the motives of their proponents.**

The ongoing consultations on the restructuring of the United Nations are a matter of extreme importance to us and the rest of the world. The current skewed power structures in the world body cannot be condoned on any conceivable grounds of democracy. Organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council, must be restructured to reflect the full will of nations, great or small. We need to avoid situations where few countries, by virtue of their privileged positions, dictate the agenda for everybody else. We have witnessed instances where the sovereignty and territorial integrity of small and weak countries have been violated by the mighty and powerful, in defiance of agreed rules of procedures and the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

The international community needs, as it has done now, to return to the drawing board to rediscover, reassert and pursue in a practical manner, the agenda for peace, security and development for all through fostering genuine cooperation based on respect for the sovereignty, equality and territorial integrity of all states.

It is within this context that we call upon the international community to remain true to the original principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter to achieve peace, security and development. This will allow us to bequeath the future generation with a far safer, prosperous and stable world. It is my hope that, as we conclude our deliberations, we will have asserted our commitment to these ideals.

I thank you.

RGM/ms