



PAPUA NEW GUINEA STATEMENT

TO THE

65th SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

BY

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Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea

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Mr President
Secretary General of the United Nations
Heads of States and Governments
Heads of Delegations
Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me first of all join other delegations in offering congratulations to H.E Mr Joseph Deiss for his election to the post of President of the 65th United Nations General Assembly Session.

With your guidance, my delegation is confident that we can be able to discuss the different global challenges confronting us in the spirit of cooperation to further the common good of mankind.

We are meeting at a time when the world is going through some mixed developments.

While in some parts of the globe, countries are experiencing relative peace, in other parts, they are embroiled in armed conflict.

While some countries are enjoying economic growth and budget surpluses, others are experiencing economic stagnation or contraction.

Mr President

Implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The focus at this UN General Assembly Session on reviewing the progress on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals is most appropriate.

The achievement of the eight (8) cross-cutting goals we set ourselves would improve the quality of life for all our peoples.

Just last week, we concluded a stock take of the progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

While the score card is mixed, the commitment by member states to continue with implementation of measures to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 is unequivocal.

Papua New Guinea, like many developing countries, has had measured success.

As many noted last week, the advent of the global economic crisis soon after we adopted the Millennium Declaration has had adverse bearing on the implementation of the MDGs.

I would add though that had the resources promised in 2000 for MDGs been made available, the assessment sheet for many developing countries would have looked more positive.

Papua New Guinea applauds the commitment of US\$40 billion for poverty alleviation, especially to improve the health of children and women. It is our hope that this is a new resource envelope and not repackaged old commitments.

Mr President

We have noted the calls for countries to take greater ownership of the implementation of the eight (8) Millennium Development Goals.

Papua New Guinea has accepted this challenge. We will continue to do all we can to meet the obligations we assumed when we joined others in 2000 to adopt the Millennium Declaration.

The Papua New Guinea Permanent Representative to the United Nations has already outlined in detail last week our country's efforts to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

Allow me to reiterate some of the main actions we are taking.

Papua New Guinea has adapted and localized the MDGs by establishing 15 targets and 67 indicators within our Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) for the period 2005 -2010.

We have calibrated our 2011-2015 Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) and designed our Development Strategic Plan (DSP) to achieve the MDGs.

In addition, we have envisioned our 2050 Vision Statement to be consistent with the Millennium Development Goals.

Our Official Development Assistance Programs with our donor partners are being gradually realigned to enable Papua New Guinea to eventually meet its MDG targets.

On a wider scale, we urge donor partners to abide by the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. In the Pacific, we have adopted the Cairns Compact to better coordinate development assistance as well as ensure effective delivery.

Developed countries need to also raise their ODA to 0.7% of their Gross National Income in line with their commitments.

In line with our commitment towards MDG 3, my Government has tabled before the Papua New Guinea legislature a proposed legislation to reserve 22 seats for women in the National Parliament.

As it relates to MDG 2, we have introduced the Universal Primary Education Policy and aim to achieve free primary level education for all children by 2015.

Mr President

Papua New Guinea is under no illusion that achievement of the MDGs is a unilateral undertaking. This is a joint undertaking between developed and developing countries, just as it is a cooperative effort between Government and Civil society organizations.

It is for this reason, my country is disappointed that the 8th MDG on Global Partnership for Development appears to attract little serious interest from the developed countries.

We note that real value of aid remained constant and the Doha Development Round remains an unfinished affair.

Of concern to us, as well, is the inability of many developing countries to enjoy equitable treatment from the Bretton Woods institutions.

Despite the best of efforts within the WTO and the APEC processes, the international trading environment continues to be characterized by inequities. Often less visible but still harmful, global trade continues to be lumbered by trade protectionist measures.

Mr President

Peace and International Security environment

In the area of international peace and security, the World, unfortunately, is no safer today than when the United Nations was established.

War continues to be waged in Afghanistan. Iraq continues to suffer from regular suicide bombs. The Korean peninsula continues to be a flashpoint in the Asia region and the Middle East continues to be a hotbed of tension.

Likewise, religious conflict and ethnic tensions continue to be perpetrated in many parts of Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

The international community needs to do more to address these conflicts, especially the Afghanistan and Iraq issues.

The fragile peace and global security environment is further amplified by the continued presence of the "blue helmets" in many parts of world.

Papua New Guinea commends the efforts of the UN Peace Keeping Forces, many of which have to operate under very trying circumstances. We wish to thank those contributing countries for bearing this onerous responsibility on all our behalf.

For our part, I am pleased to announce that my Government has passed the International Obligations Bill to provide the legal framework for Papua New Guinea's participation in UN peace keeping operations.

Acts of terrorism continue and the threat of another terror attack on a scale similar to that of 9/11 remains real. The international community must continue to strengthen its cooperation to address this scourge.

Nuclear Weapons continue to provide anxiety in our security considerations. While some may argue that Nuclear Weapons have provided the reasons as to why the World has not gone into another World War, my government believes that this weapon of mass destruction is unnecessary and needs to be eliminated.

As part of that process, we support efforts for the strengthening of the mechanisms aimed at non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mr President

Environment and Climate Change

Like other countries from the Pacific Region, Climate Change is of great concern to Papua New Guinea.

For us, we need no scientist to tell us of the negative impact of climate change.

We live it and we suffer from it.

Many of our islands, like the Carteret, and coastal habitats, like my own Murik area, are being gradually submerged by rising sea levels. The result is that people living in these areas are becoming environmental refugees.

Lowland diseases, like malaria, are now occurring in the highlands of Papua New Guinea.

Unusual weather patterns, like increased incidences of cyclones, frequent heavy flooding and mud slides are causing havoc to our economies and exacting untold suffering to our people.

All these attendant climate change challenges are taxing the budgetary resources of our countries and undermining our development plans.

The international community has rightfully recognized the insidious effects of Climate Change and has agreed to take concerted action under the ambit of the Kyoto Protocol, the Bali Road Map and the Copenhagen Accord to address the issue.

Papua New Guinea urges our developed partners to shoulder a greater responsibility in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and in assisting developing countries, particularly Small Island States, adapt to climate change and its effects.

Resources for adaptation and mitigation measures, particularly those committed in Copenhagen, must be made more readily available to developing countries.

We note the initiative announced by Japan last week during the MDGs review and look forward to further details on what it constitutes. We also applaud the financial commitments and policy initiatives that China announced to assist developing countries implement the Millennium Development Goals.

For Papua New Guinea, we have, with our colleagues from the Coalition of Rainforest Nations, committed ourselves to a program of Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, more commonly known as REDD plus.

As this year is the International Year of Biodiversity, let me say this REDD plus initiative will assure the protection of important biodiversity.

In addition, Papua New Guinea has, at the national level, adopted an Action Plan for Climate Compatible Development and established a specific Office of Climate Change and Development to oversee our actions on climate change issues.

As part of our strategy to reduce our carbon footprint, we are now aggressively seeking to develop more hydro-power and geo-thermal for our energy requirements.

We have also embarked on a major commercialization exercise of our gas reserves to deliver to the world a cleaner energy alternative.

Mr President

United Nations Reforms

Many of us here have recognized the need to reform the United Nations to take account of the changed circumstances under which it operates as well as the new and emerging challenges that it must address.

We note and commend the UN Secretary General for the ongoing administrative and institutional reforms he is undertaking to improve the efficiency of the UN to better serve the member states. We urge all stakeholders in the UN Security Council Reform agenda to demonstrate courage and leadership so that the composition and workings of the Council can be reformed in ways that are equitable and reflective of the current geo-political and economic realities.

Papua New Guinea has previously stated at this Assembly that we believe the expansion of the membership of the Security Council was logical, to allow for representation from certain developed and developing countries.

In this regard, I wish to reaffirm Papua New Guinea's support for Germany and Japan to be included as permanent members in any expanded Security Council.

Mr President

Conclusion

The inequities that exist in the global trading system today are daunting but they are by no means intractable. With genuine partnership, we can and we shall overcome them.

The World may not be any safer today than when the United Nations was established 65 years ago, but having been able to avert another world war is ample testimony that the international community has the political will to address tensions and discord in a measured way.

The United Nations, and the international legal architecture that it has actively developed and promoted, has played a significant role in this regard - thus underscoring the continuing relevancy of this august body.

Thank you.