

MALAWI

STATEMENT BY H. E. Mr. STEVE D. MATENJE, S. C., PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI TO THE UNITED NATIONS DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN THE 64th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, OCTOBER 7th, 2009

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me congratulate you and members of your bureau on your election to guide the work of the Second Committee during the 64th session of the General Assembly.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by Sudan, Nepal, Tunisia and the Democratic Republic of Congo on behalf of the G-77 and China, the Least Developed Countries, the African Group and the Southern Africa Development Community, respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

The Committee is starting its work with a very daunting agenda and at a time when the world is reeling from the effects of multiple challenges, including the financial and economic crisis, climate change and volatile commodity prices due to an inequitable international trading system. These challenges are impacting adversely on the achievement by many developing countries of the internationally-agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation believes that the crises we face may only be addressed through renewed multilateralism and dialogue within the spirit of sovereign equality of States. It is in this context that the theme of the 64th Session of the General Assembly, namely: "*Effective global responses to global crises, strengthening multilateralism and dialogue among civilization for international peace, security and development*" is not only relevant but also timely to the work of the Second Committee.

We are confident that under your leadership, Mr. Chairman, we will together assist the General Assembly to find common ground in the continuous process of addressing the multiple challenges facing the world today.

Mr. Chairman,

The United Nations remains the only universal and legitimate forum through which to achieve the global collaboration and cooperation needed to push the global development agenda forward. Supported by appropriate reforms such as the Delivering as One initiative, the UN is key to the achievement of national development goals in developing countries. In this regard, Malawi's priority is to ensure the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015.

The MDGs are only achievable if donor countries live up to their commitments and play a larger role in their success. Key within that role is: transfer of technology; an open, rule-based non-discriminatory trade system; gender equality and, critically, increased, predictable and more coherent official development aid. This is the essence of MDG 8 which outlines the practical needs for partnerships between developed and developing countries if the MDGs are to be achieved.

Mr. Chairman,

Indeed, in 2002, world leaders gathered in Monterrey, Mexico, to affirm their commitment to funding efforts to achieve the MDGs. The longstanding target of 0.7% of donor countries' GNP in aid to developing countries was endorsed anew. Since that date, however, commitments have stalled and most donor countries are not on track to reach this target. Regrettably, many developing countries are similarly off track in the implementation of the MDGs as a result.

Mr. Chairman,

Given that there are only 6 more years to 2015, there is clearly no time to waste and no room for complacency. We need to strengthen global partnerships to address the obstacles that are limiting progress in the achievement of all the MDGs by developing countries. The obstacles are many but the eradication of poverty and hunger and the provision of adequate infrastructure particularly in the least developed countries is no doubt the starting point for achieving the MDGs.

Mr. Chairman,

Food shortages threaten the foundations of democracy and good governance and constitute a major setback to national development. For this reason, Malawi attaches great importance to the attainment of food and nutrition security in the achievement of the MDGs and has placed agriculture and food production among the priorities in its development agenda. As a result, Malawi has within a short period of time transformed from being a food deficit nation to a food surplus nation and is able to export some of its surplus food.

In this regard, my delegation appreciates the inclusion of a new item on "*Agriculture and Food Security*" on the agenda of the Second Committee. We will endeavor to work with the United Nations to find tangible solutions to promote global agriculture and food production.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is, however, aware that agricultural production hinges strongly on climate change and the environment. Even with the best agricultural strategies, climate change poses a major set back to agriculture and food production. In this regard, we urge the international community to find pragmatic solutions to the most pressing challenges posed by climate change by supporting scientific research and the development of appropriate technologies for combating its effects and sharing the results of that research and the technologies with developing countries. This is particularly important to developing countries like Malawi with agro-based economies largely dependent on rain-fed agriculture.

Mr. Chairman,

The continued breakdown of the Doha round of trade talks is another major setback to the advancement of developing countries. The deadlock over those talks continues to deny developing countries the much needed and effective source of development finance. We urge the international community to ensure the resumption of the trade talks and bring them to an early and successful conclusion taking into account the special needs of the least developed countries and the landlocked developing countries. This is possible if the G8 countries are willing to engage in genuine dialogue to solve the problems that brought the trade talks to a standstill. In addition, it is imperative to increase the participation of developing countries in the decision-making processes of multilateral financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Mr. Chairman,

For countries such as Malawi which are both least developed and landlocked, the challenges are exceptionally daunting. Landlocked developing countries on average pay almost three times higher for transport services.

In view of such challenges Malawi is exploring with our neighbour, Mozambique, ways and means of opening an inland water channel to the Indian Ocean in order to facilitate access to trade in the sub-region within the context of the Almaty Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries and the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. We appeal to the international community to support this endeavour both financially and technically.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to assure you, Mr. Chairman, of its commitment to working with you and the other delegations in ensuring that the Committee successfully completes the work allocated to it.

I thank you all for your attention.