

S T A T E M E N T

by Mr. Nikolay V. Chulkov, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

at the plenary meeting of the 59-th session of the General Assembly on agenda items 38 a) “New Partnership for Africa’s Development: progress in implementation and international support”; b) “Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa” and 46 “2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa”

18 October 2004

Mr. President,

The Russian Federation views the strengthening of stability on the African continent as an integral part of the efforts of the international community to build under the auspices of the UN a global system to counteract new threats and challenges. We will not be able to achieve a harmonious development of international relations if African states, being one of the largest international communities, still remain in a politically, socially, economically and ethnically "seismic"-prone zone.

We are pleased to note that the African countries and regional organizations of the continent are taking serious efforts to settle conflicts by encouraging peace talks and peace agreements in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

We support new approaches in the UN peace-keeping practice, namely a close interaction of UN missions working in neighboring African states. It is important to ensure coordination in this work. Here, however, we should be particular careful: coherent activities of the UN forces should be based on principles of total respect for sovereignty of separate states and not go beyond mandates defined for specific missions.

We welcome proposals on reinforcing national borders of African states. The Russian delegation has pointed out on numerous occasions that specific measures should be taken at the borders to counter such dangerous phenomena as transborder spillovers of conflicts, movements of illegal armed formations, mercenaries and child-soldiers, illicit arms trafficking, illicit natural resources export, without causing any prejudice to inter-state communication, trade and economic cooperation, integration processes, near-border population communication.

Africa has not only accumulated a lot of problems, it has also succeeded in mobilizing equal potential of international cooperation for their resolution. It is important to make an effective and timely use of such potential.

Mr. President,

The implementation of social and economic dimension of the New partnership for Africa's development (NEPAD) is gathering speed. We are pleased to note the determination of African peoples to follow NEPAD goals and objectives, and the willingness of the international community – Africa's multilateral and bilateral development partners – to render them all possible support. We consider NEPAD as an effective mechanism for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on the continent. We take note of the recommendation of the Secretary-General report addressed to partners of African countries on the need to bring much needed coherence to trade, aid and debt policies and call for coordination of the current initiatives on Africa which should be aimed at mobilizing efforts in support for implementation of NEPAD.

As a G-8 member, Russia is making its tangible contribution to the implementation of the decisions taken by the Group at its recent summits in support for NEPAD, and the measures designed to overcome most urgent problems of the developing countries, in particular in Africa.

Russia keeps focusing its assistance to Africa on such important for the continent area as the debt relief within the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC). In 1998-2003, we wrote off African countries' debt at the amount of about 11,3 billion US dollars. Intergovernmental agreements to settle the debt of a number of African states were signed in 2003. Russia contributes significantly to the HIPC Initiative Trust Fund.

The Russian Federation offers trade preferences to 50 countries of the African continent, including 29 least developed countries whose import to Russia is exempt from duties. In 2003, Russia imported most of the goods from Africa under the preferential treatment.

Priority is given to professional training in the assistance that Russia renders to African countries in the sphere of education: the current year alone, it has provided over 700 public educational grants to the countries of African continent. For the first time cooperation in this area has been extended to personnel training for subregional organizations, particularly, the Southern African Development Community.

Russia continues to provide a targeted humanitarian disaster relief assistance to African countries. In 2003, Russia shipped emergency food aid to Angola through the UN World Food Program. We made a voluntary contribution to the budget of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to finance humanitarian operations in Africa.

Aware of the urgency of problems related to the spread of malaria in Africa, and its negative impact on social and economic development of the continent, we support the UN persistent work in carrying out programs to roll back this disease. That is why a multifold assistance in health area is an important component of our assistance to the African continent. Out of the overall pledge of \$ 20 million announced by Russia to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in 2002-2006, we have paid to date \$ 7,5 million. In response to the appeal of the G-8

partners, Russia has also joined the Global Polio Eradication Initiative: to date \$ 3 million have been transferred to the WHO for its implementation.

Mr. President,

The African continent is still confronted with numerous problems, including those in social and economic areas. However, the commitment of African countries to the implementation of NEPAD with a view to achieving MDGs by the year 2015 requires that all of us show solidarity with the peoples of the continent. Russia's intention is to continue its effective participation in joint efforts to promote the development of African States.

Thank you.