



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

**ADDRESS**

**BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY ROBERT GABRIEL MUGABE,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE,**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 61<sup>ST</sup> SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY,**

**NEW YORK**

**20 SEPTEMBER 2006**

**Your Excellency the President of the 61 Session of the United Nations General**

**Assembly, Madame Shaikha Rashed Al Khalifa,**

**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,**

**Madame President,**

**Let me begin my statement by echoing the sentiments of those who have congratulated you for assuming the Presidency of the 61st Session of the General Assembly, as well as those who have expressed their appreciation for the manner in which your predecessor, Mr Jan Eliasson, successfully conducted the business of the 60<sup>th</sup> session. Let me, in the same vein, Madame President, congratulate the Republic of Montenegro for its admission to the United Nations family.**

**Madame President,**

**I also wish to pay special tribute to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan, for his vision and exemplary leadership of the United Nations Organisation over the past ten years. We commend him for his tireless efforts to assist member states in transforming the United Nations into a dynamic, relevant and effective instrument for meeting challenges that confront us as we try to make the world a better place for everyone.**

**Mr Secretary-General, your achievements, especially in the area of promotion of peace and development which culminated in the Millennium Summit in the year 2000 and the Review Summit held last year, will always be remembered as historic for the important decisions which we made on both occasions. As you come to the end of your tenure of this high office, we wish you the best in your future endeavours and hope that you will be available to serve the international community wherever you may be needed.**

**Madame President,**

**The theme for our debate this year, "Implementation of the Global Partnership for Development as a follow-up to the 2005 World Summit," is most appropriate. We acknowledged last year that fighting poverty was a collective undertaking. Together, we recognized that mobilizing financial resources for development is central to a global partnership for development in support of the implementation of the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.**

**For many years now, the international community has acknowledged the need for accelerated economic development in Africa. There have been many initiatives and "Programmes of Action" to achieve this objective. Indeed, the history of the United Nations in the last three decades is littered with several well-meaning initiatives, many of which unfortunately never made the transition from theory to practical implementation. We have agreed on goals, and set targets for ourselves, in our quest to meet our economic and social development challenges. Given this impressive array of initiatives, it is curious and ironic that the aggregate economic performance of our countries has not made a difference to the majority of our people.**

**Madame President,**

**One explanation for our development predicament and the many failed initiatives is the wide gap between rhetoric and concrete action on the ground. We have on many occasions agreed on making available the means for implementing agreed goals. We**

have made targets for making those resources available. Yet, at the same time, we have witnessed some countries and groups taking concerted actions such as illegal economic sanctions to frustrate our development efforts.

In the case of Zimbabwe, these countries have blocked any balance of payments and other support from the international financial institutions that they control. Following the heroic and successful efforts of the people of Zimbabwe in clearing requisite arrears to the IMF, these negative forces manipulated decision-making at the institution to deny us any new support. They have even tried to restrict investment inflows, all this on account of political differences between them and us. Is it not a paradox that while we are denied resources for development, funding is readily made available to support elements bent on subverting the democratically expressed will of the majority of our citizens and to unconstitutionally effect regime change? We condemn this interference in our domestic affairs. This warped thinking must not, and will not succeed. My Government will carry out its mandate to protect the country's citizens. We warn that any attempt to change that mandate through unconstitutional means will meet with the full wrath of the law. It is for this reason that we welcome this debate that seeks to address the yawning gap between agreed action plans and implementation, and between rhetoric and what actually happens on the ground.

We fully acknowledge that national governments shoulder the primary responsibility for the implementation of their development plans, including achieving the MDGs. However, it is absolutely necessary that our efforts at the national level, including the adoption and implementation of correct and relevant programmes, be supported, and not hampered, by lack of international cooperation. This session therefore would be of great value if agreement were to be reached on financing for development, including the establishment of mechanisms to measure aid flows. Such financing should be adequate, predictable and consistent in order for it to have a meaningful impact.

Madame President,

**The HIV/AIDS pandemic continues to cause untold havoc in Africa, particularly in Southern Africa, owing to high levels of poverty which make it difficult for the affected people to access medication. Zimbabwe welcomes the continuing efforts by the international community of nations to find lasting solutions to the scourge of HIV and AIDS. We urge the donor community, in cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, to assist in scaling-up access to affordable essential drugs, particularly for developing countries.**

**The tendency to use assistance in the fight against HIV/AIDS as reward for political compliance and malleability is a policy which the United Nations should condemn. Given the fact that the pandemic does not respect borders, the denial of assistance to countries on political grounds through a self-serving and selective approach would do more harm and weaken international efforts to fight the pandemic. In my country, for example, on average, a Zimbabwean AIDS patient is receiving about US\$4.00 per annum in international assistance compared with about US\$172.00 per annum for other countries in the region. However, even against this background, my Government has registered some modest success in reducing the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate from about 29 per cent in 2000 to 18.1 percent in 2006 on the strength of its own resources and programmes.**

**Madame President,**

**Without disputing the inevitability of migration, the problem of brain drain is of great concern to my Government and indeed to other developing countries. The brain drain has indeed proved to be a handicap to sustainable development and if it is not addressed now, the prospects of developing countries meeting the MDGs by 2015 would be very minimal. While developing countries are losing skilled manpower to migration, the benefits associated with migrant remittances are far less than the cost of human resource and skills development. We need to develop solutions that give due recognition and respect to the investment made by governments into human resources and skills development of citizens as well as the human rights of migrants.**

Madame President,

**While Official Development Assistance is desirable, what developing countries need more is an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. For developing countries to realise the full potential of international trade in enhancing economic growth, it is quintessential that the main bathers to their exports be removed. In this regard, we are concerned that tariffs have remained high on goods that are strategically important to developing economies such as textiles and farm products. A lot could be realised with the right partnerships and fair terms of trade. We share the view that the implementation of the development dimensions of the Doha work programme will go a long way in assisting developing countries to compete in this global village. It is therefore disturbing that there has been no progress in breaking the deadlock on the Doha Round of international trade negotiations. The failure of multilateral negotiations will give rise to bilateral arrangements that are inimical to fair trade. We cannot help but suspect that the breakdown was deliberately engineered in order to perpetuate the status quo that favours one group of countries at the expense of another.**

Madame President,

**The United Nations is uniquely placed to provide the framework for international cooperation. There is consensus that the United Nations should play a fundamental and central role in the promotion of international cooperation for development. In this regard it is important that coherence and coordination be enhanced as agreed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. At the country level, the United Nations system should be effectively coordinated in order to support national efforts in poverty reduction and sustainable development.**

Madame President,

**While my Government applauds the United Nations' continuing efforts to elaborate a convention on terrorism, we urge Member States to guard against a situation where**

**established international conventions are ignored, and resolutions of the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies on this issue are disregarded. In our attempt to deal with the scourge of terrorism, it is also necessary to address the underlying causes of this phenomenon. To demonstrate its commitment to fight terrorism, the Parliament of Zimbabwe has come up with the Suppression of Foreign and International Terrorism Bill that seeks to fight foreign and international terrorism, as well as mercenary activities.**

**Madame President,**

**The recent developments in the Middle East are a cause of great concern. We condemn the disproportionate use of force by Israel in Gaza and Lebanon and the detention of elected Palestinian members of Parliament and Ministers. We firmly reject the collective punishment of the Palestinian and Lebanese people and the intrusion into their territories in violation of international law. We call upon the international community, particularly the United Nations Security Council and the Quartet to make every effort to ensure that the brokered ceasefire continues to hold.**

**It is sad that the Security Council dithered and failed to take timely action to stop the massacres and wanton destruction of civilian infrastructure in Lebanon, all because of the misguided national interests of one super power. The status quo in the Council, where a few powerful countries hold the world to ransom is no longer tenable. There is therefore a strong case here for addressing the core issue of the democratisation of international governance. Africa remains the only continent which does not have a permanent seat with veto power in the Security Council. That situation is unacceptable. It needs to be corrected and corrected now. The position of the African Union on this issue is very clear. Africa demands two permanent seats, complete with veto power, plus two additional non-permanent seats. We will not compromise on this matter until our concerns are adequately addressed.**

**Madame President,**

**In many parts of Africa, the dawn of an unprecedented era of peace and tranquillity has allowed us to refocus our attention and resources towards economic development. There can be no better time than now for the international community to augment our own efforts to bring home to our people the peace dividend we have so patiently waited for. We therefore call on the international community to renew its solidarity with Africa through tangible support in the form of increased resources, decisive debt relief as well as new and additional financial resources for investment and growth.**

**Madame President,**

**Let me conclude by reiterating the fact that the future of the international community is best served by an international order that is based on strengthening multilateralism. It is our conviction that only through a multilateral approach can we achieve peace and development. For us to successfully tackle the challenges that we face, there is need for more than just pious expressions of solidarity. Together as global partners in development, we can guarantee a prosperous future for generations to come. Such a partnership should be based on the principles of sovereign equality of nations and on mutual benefit. This, Madame President, is the path we should strive to follow.**

**I thank you.**