MALAWI

MALAWI AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS: CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Statement by

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. BINGU WA MUTHARIKA

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

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MR. PRESIDENT

MR. SECRETARY GENERAL

YOUR EXCELLENCIES, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

I am pleased to be given this opportunity to make a contribution on the structure, challenges, implementation and follow up on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). But before going so, I wish to underscore that the rationale for the MDGs is as valid today as it was some five years ago.

Let me start by stating that my country, Malawi, has made heroic efforts in meeting the MDGs. Our report entitled "*MALAWI AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS: CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS (September 2000 to September 2005)* has been distributed. This report presents in a graphic form, what we had planned to do in order to achieve the MDGs; the challenges we are facing; our achievements despite the challenges; and the way forward.

MR. PRESIDENT.

As you can see from the Report, we in Malawi have taken the stand that while the challenges are indeed enormous, and while we need huge resources to succeed, we will still forge ahead to achieve what we can with our limited financial resources and capacity. I am pleased to state that we have made a solid start and hope that the United Nations will recognize these efforts.

MR. PRESIDENT

In our efforts to implement the MDGs during the past five years, we have learned a number of lessons that are essential in meeting the targets laid down in the MDGs by the year 2015. The first lesson is that the MDGs made assumptions that cannot be validated. For instance, the goals assumed that the goods, services, food and incomes required to meet these goals were readily available and can be produced and sourced in the poor African countries and that what we needed was merely to re-organize the distribution structures. This is not the case. The reality is that no goods and services are available and hence our countries cannot meet the MDGs without first creating new wealth.

Above all, the UN ignored the need to establish new production structures in sub-Saharan Africa to supply the goods and services that were needed to meet the MDGs. In short, the MDGs were based on the supply of services that do not exist in the poor countries. That is the greatest challenge for the MDGs.

The second assumption of the MDGs is that institutional capacity was available in all the poor countries. The United Nations appears to have underestimated the challenges that sub-Saharan countries face in putting together a system of good governance that would have resulted in kick-starting macro-economic growth within a stable political and economic environment. It also underestimated the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on the growth process.

The third assumption was that the UN underestimated the flight of capital and erosion of growth due to external debt servicing. It also assumed that there would be a fair and equitable global trading system that would boost the exports of the poor countries. In other words, it ignored the reluctance by industrialized countries to conclude the Doha Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations that would have enabled African countries to have greater access to the global markets for their products.

In other words, the poor countries cannot benefit from globalization if the industrialized countries are not co-operative.

MR. PRESIDENT

These are some of the issues that concern my Government that we need to address in this High Level Meeting if we are to move ahead. I do not know any other way. The MDGs therefore represent the greatest challenge to both developing and developed countries. We shall need greater co-operation among the nations than ever before to meet this challenge.

THANK YOU