

Your Excellency, Mr. Vuk Jeremic, President of the 67th
Session of the United Nations General Assembly,
Your Majesties,
Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Your Excellency, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary
General of the United Nations,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of my delegation and my own behalf, I extend to
Your Excellency, Mr Jeremic, our warmest congratulations on
your election as the President of the 67th Session of the United
Nations General Assembly. Your extensive experience in both
regional and international affairs will undoubtedly enrich the
debate and proceedings during this Session. I wish to assure you
of the full cooperation of Zimbabwe as you discharge the
onerous duties of this high office.

Mr. President,

Let me begin by reaffirming the rightful and important role of
the United Nations in the management of issues affecting

international peace and security. In the quest for a more just and equitable international order, Zimbabwe strongly opposed to unilateralism, is committed to multilateralism. We therefore would like to see a United Nations that continues to be a guarantor of world peace and security, and a bulwark in the fight for justice and equality among nations. It behoves us all, therefore, to take the necessary steps to ensure that the United Nations is not marginalised on international issues. Equally important, the United Nations must in future never allow itself to be abused by any member state or group of States that seeks to achieve parochial partisan goals. The Charter of the United Nations clearly stipulates it as an international body that should work for the good of all the peoples of the world.

Mr. President,

We recognize that there are existing and emerging threats and challenges that continue to frustrate our individual and collective efforts to attain greater economic development and social progress, as well as peace and security. But the increasing trend by the NATO States inspired by the arrogant belief that they are the most powerful among us, which has demonstrated itself

through their recent resort to unilateralism and military hegemony in Libya, is the very antithesis of the basic principles of the United Nations. In that case of Libya, the African Union and its peace-making role was defied, ignored and humiliated. May we urge the international community to collectively nip this dangerous and unwelcome aggressive development before it festers. In this regard, Mr President, the theme you have chosen for this session, namely; “Bringing about Adjustment or Settlement of International Disputes or Situations by Peaceful Means,” is very appropriate. The warmongers of our world have done us enough harm. Wherever they have imposed themselves, chaos in place of peace has been the result. The situation created by the Bush-Blair illegal campaign of aggression against Iraq has made worse the conflict between the Sunnies and Shiats. Leave alone the disastrous economic consequences of that unlawful invasion. Libya has been made equally unstable, following NATO’s deceitful intervention under the sham cover of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and the phoney principle of the responsibility to protect.

Mr. President,

Zimbabwe firmly believes in the peaceful settlement of disputes between and among States, in a manner that is consistent with the principles and purposes of the United Nations. In the maintenance of international peace and security, much more needs to be done to prevent conflicts from erupting in the first place, and to prevent relapses once a situation has been stabilized. Beyond deploying adequate resources to manage conflicts, it is important to address their underlying causes, and to pursue, more proactively, a comprehensive approach focusing on conflict prevention, peace-building, peace-sustenance and development. In pursuing this cause, my delegation strongly believes that adherence to the Charter of the United Nations should be a solemn obligation of all Member States.

Mr. President,

We have noticed, with deep regret, that the provisions of the United Nations Charter dealing with the peaceful settlement of disputes, have, on occasion, been ignored by the Security Council. In contrast, there appears to be an insatiable appetite for war, embargos, sanctions and other punitive actions, even on

matters that are better resolved through multilateral cooperation. Instead of resorting to the peaceful resolution of disputes, we are daily witnessing a situation where might is now right. Mr President, we need to take stock of the inspiring preamble to the United Nations Charter, where the plenipotentiaries who met in San Francisco in 1945 undertook to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.” This is especially so when global events represent a radical departure from that solemn and noble declaration as is happening at present. What do the NATO Alliance members say about this? One may ask.

Mr. President,

It is therefore important that the United Nations Security Council should respect and support the decisions, processes and priorities of regional organisations. In contrast, recent events, as has already been stated particularly with reference to Africa, have demonstrated the scant regard that is given by the United Nations and certain powerful members of the international community to the pivotal role of regional organisations. Effective cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will only become viable and sustainable when

developed on the basis of mutual respect and support, as well as on shared responsibility and commitment.

Mr. President,

It is regrettable to note that certain unacceptable concepts are currently being foisted upon the United Nations membership, in the absence of inter-governmental mandates. For instance, there is no agreement yet on the concept of “responsibility to protect,” especially with respect to the circumstances under which it might be evoked. We are concerned by the clear and growing evidence that the concept of “responsibility to protect” has begun to be applied and seriously abused, thus inevitably compromising and undermining the cardinal principle of the sovereignty of states and the United Nations Charter principles of territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic affairs of countries.

Mr. President,

For the international community to successfully deal with global economic, social, security and environmental challenges, the existence of international institutions to handle them and a

culture of genuine multilateralism are critical. The United Nations, its specialized agencies, and international financial institutions, are the only instruments available for responding effectively to the global challenges we face in this global village. It is therefore critical that these structures are reformed, and realigned in response to both global challenges and our contemporary realities, in order to better serve our collective interests.

Mr President,

This august Assembly is the most representative organ within the United Nations family. We must therefore dedicate ourselves to finding consensus on measures to revitalise it, so that it fulfills its mandate in accordance with the provisions of the Charter. We wish to reiterate our deep concern that the mandate, powers and jurisdiction of the General Assembly are shrinking as a consequence of the Security Council gradually encroaching upon the Assembly's areas of competence. This, in our view, upsets the delicate balance envisaged under the Charter, and undermines the overall effectiveness of the United Nations system. The General Assembly must remain the main

deliberative, policy-making organ of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

We have been seized with the debate on the reform of the Security Council for far too long. My delegation fully supports the current intergovernmental negotiations on the reform and expansion of the Security Council. However, we wish to caution against an open-ended approach which short-changes those of us from regions that are not represented at all among the permanent membership of the Council.

Zimbabwe stands by Africa's demand for two permanent seats complete with a veto, if the veto is to be retained, plus two additional non-permanent seats, as clearly articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. For how long, Mr President, will the international community continue to ignore the aspirations of a whole continent of fifty-four countries? We shall not be bought-off with empty promises, nor shall we accept some cosmetic tinkering of the Security Council disguised as reform. It is indeed a travesty of justice that the African continent, which accounts for almost a third of the

membership represented in this august Assembly, has no permanent representation in the Security Council. Is this good governance? Is this democracy? And, is this justice?

My delegation condemns unreservedly, the economic sanctions imposed against my country and people in an unjustified effort to deny them the chance to fully benefit from their natural resource endowment. We wish to remind those who have maintained sanctions against us that there is international consensus, fully supported by the Southern African Development Community, the African Union, the Non-Aligned Movement and the rest of the progressive international community, that these sanctions must immediately and unconditionally be lifted. Mr President, in the interest of justice, fairness and good relations, we call on those countries which have imposed sanctions against us to review their positions. Zimbabweans have suffered for too long under these completely illegal punitive measures.

Mr. President,

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming Zimbabwe's commitment

to the principles that have brought us together in the United Nations for the last 67 years. My country is confident that in this inextricably interdependent world, our commitment to the common good, which this Organization embodies, will be resolute and enduring. Zimbabwe will continue to stand firm, and to condemn unilateralism, the imposition of unwarranted and illegal sanctions on nations, and the unwarranted extra-territorial application of national laws.

I thank you.

RGM/gm