



Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania
to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY
THE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA,
H.E. BENJAMIN WILLIAM MKAPA

AT THE
HIGH LEVEL PLENARY MEETING
OF THE 60TH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

14th SEPTEMBER, 2005

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF
TANZANIA, HIS EXCELLENCY BENJAMIN WILLIAMS MKAPA, AT THE
HIGH LEVEL PLENARY MEETING OF THE 60TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY,
NEW YORK, 14TH SEPTEMBER 2005

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In 2000, world leaders undertook an in-depth review of decades of global efforts and unfulfilled promises to fight unacceptable levels of poverty, agreed on shared universal values, and ushered in hopes for timed and measurable development goals — the Millennium Development Goals.

Today, 5 years later, leaders stand accused of having failed to live up to their commitments. The Millennium Development Goals reflect our shared values about basic human rights—the right to life in dignity. We cannot turn our backs on these basic values and the duties they impose on all countries and governments. To do so is to devalue our common humanity. We should, instead, renew our commitment—individually and collectively—to MDGs, and to their full integration with our national domestic policies, and international development strategies, policies and actions.

For too long there has been an unnecessary debate about whether the solution to poverty in Africa and elsewhere is more money. Of course it is not simply a question of money. But without money few strategies, if any, would succeed. Likewise good governance is necessary, but alone it would not eradicate poverty.

And the developing countries are not blaming rich and industrialized countries for everything that is wrong or unfulfilled. What they are asking of them is a new commitment to keep their word.

Developing countries must, on their part, fulfil their commitments to mobilise domestic resources, to reform institutions to respond to national priorities, and to adopt effective, nationally owned economic and social policies to spur economic growth. The broader commitments to democracy, human rights and good governance must also be discharged.

Developed countries on their part must fulfil their responsibilities by increasing the flow, and improving the effectiveness of development assistance;

ensuring the Doha trade round is truly development-oriented; embracing wider and deeper debt relief; and facilitating technology transfer.

I thank the few rich countries that have attained or exceeded the 0.7 percent of national income target as official development assistance. I thank the EU for having a timetable for the different member countries to reach this target by the year 2015. I thank the G8 leaders who in their Gleneagles Summit agreed to increase annual aid flows and cancel the debts of least developed countries. I call on them not to backslide on these honourable commitments.

Then there is the unnecessary debate about absorptive capacity. Developing countries must be assessed severally, not collectively, to determine whether they have the systems of governance and the absorptive capacity to benefit from increased levels of resources.

Let me give the example of my own country with regard to the education goals.

Using our own enhanced domestic revenues, increased ODA, and debt relief, we were able to invest heavily in education, improving access and quality. We removed school fees for primary education, and Net Enrolment Rate (NER) increased from 58.8 percent in 2000 to 90.5 percent last year; and gender parity has been attained. By 2006, Tanzania will have attained the second Millennium Development Goal, 9 years ahead of target. Yes, where a developing country and its development partners all fulfil their responsibilities, it is possible to fast track the attainment of MDGs.

Mr. President:

It never occurred to me that this august body, meeting at such a high level, could have problems, not in agreeing to eradicate, but only in recommitting itself to halve poverty by 2015. I urge, seriously, that the world focus more on preventing crises, rather than responding to them. When a jumbo jet crashes, we all rush in with assistance; but we forget that each day 30,000 children die unnecessarily from poverty-related preventable causes, equivalent to 100 jumbo jets crashing every day.

A number of blueprints for success in the war on poverty have been promulgated since 2000. These include Monterrey; the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation; the Commission for Africa; the United Nations Millennium Project, and many others. Let us now start their implementation.

Mr. President:

Aid is not charity; it is investment in peace, security and human solidarity. By not addressing the causes of poverty, we are institutionalising the business of charity. It does not make political sense; it does not make economic sense; it does not make ethical sense.

I commit my government and country to the timely pursuit of Millennium Development Goals and ask all countries, rich and poor, at the very minimum to implement, fully the Outcome Document from this meeting, for which I commend the negotiators. I thank you.