

STATEMENT
BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT
OF
THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE,
COMRADE R.G. MUGABE,
ON THE OCCASION
OF THE SECOND G77/CHINA SUMMIT
DOHA, QATAR,
12-16 JUNE 2005

Your Highness Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifah,
Your Majesties,
Your Excellency, the Chairman of the G77 and China,
Mr James Percival Patterson,
Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Comrades and Friends.

Mr Chairman,

I join my colleagues in extending my delegation's deepest gratitude to the people and Government of Qatar for the warm hospitality extended to us since our arrival in Doha. I would also like to acknowledge Qatar's generosity in hosting this Second Summit of our Group of 77 and China and the elaborate conference facilities thereof.

Mr Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China was founded in 1964, not by choice, but out of circumstances which relegated us to the receiving end of global economic imbalances. Our resolute determination to resist economic marginalisation in the so-called global village and to forge, in unison, a situation in which we are able to control our own destinies binds us together to this day.

Distinguished Delegates, today, we stand on the threshold of a new Century and a new millennium whose challenges are by no means less daunting than those of the one preceding it. This Summit therefore gives us a necessary opportunity to review progress on the implementation of the programmes and projects that we adopted at the First South Summit held in Havana, Cuba, in April 2000. It is also a platform for us to breathe new life into South-South cooperation, especially in view of the changing challenges posed by globalisation.

Mr Chairman,

The unbridled force of globalisation has brought enormous benefits to a few while confining the majority of the developing world to the periphery of the global economy. Our experience as countries of the South shows that our continued unity and cohesion as a negotiating platform provides the only avenue for us to wrestle some gains out of the process of globalisation and ensure that it benefits the majority of our populations. In this regard, the on-going round of multilateral trade negotiations provides an opportunity for us to demonstrate a unity of purpose in demanding a strong development agenda that should improve the terms and trends of trade involving our exports.

Mr Chairman,

This Summit comes at a time when there are growing and crystallising proposals to reform the United Nations and its importance cannot be overemphasised. It must

be noted that the impetus to reform that august body was borne out of our own concerted efforts as countries of the South, based upon our unshakeable convictions on the necessity to make the United Nations more representative, democratic and efficient in order for it to be reflective of the realities of today's world. We must seize this opportunity to positively influence the international agenda in favour of achieving development objectives that genuinely address our concerns. In this regard, the reform of the UN cannot be just about geographical representation or numbers in order to expand the Security Council. It must speak of the realities of our new world and show our determination to remain faithful to our people's struggles for equity and social justice.

We have already set out in the Millennium Declaration priorities for the United Nations in the coming years. In that document, we agreed that development issues should be at the centre of the world body's activities. We thus remain steadfast in our resolve to steer the United Nations to focus on the attainment of those objectives.

We expect to see those organs of the United Nations that play a key role in coordinating development issues such as the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly being accorded the centrality and prominence they deserve in order to enable them to be more effective in fighting poverty, hunger and disease.

We are encouraged by the efforts of developing countries to mobilise domestic resources for development although these need to be augmented by external resources to achieve the desired effect. We are therefore concerned about the continuous, significant, and clearly calculated, decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) in recent years and reiterate the urgent need for a substantial increase of ODA as agreed at Monterrey, Mexico. At the same time, we also call for bolder and more comprehensive initiatives to address the debt crisis faced by many developing countries, especially those in Africa.

Mr Chairman, the scourge of the HIV and AIDS pandemic requires urgent measures to contain its

potency. Again, this challenge can only be adequately addressed if those organs of the United Nations that are charged with the mobilisation of resources are elevated to positions that make them effective. And yet it is very clear that the global response to the HIV/AIDS scourge is grossly inadequate to meet the enormity of the challenges posed by the pandemic. The Global Fund needs to be adequately resourced while access to the Fund should be purely on the basis of humanitarian principles and established needs, and not political considerations. I hope this Summit will take the necessary bold decisions to advance and broaden South-South cooperation in this area especially in the manufacture of drugs to contain the disease.

Mr Chairman, as we strive to attain a secure world for all, through measures such as disarmament and the anti-terrorism campaign, we must do so while fully cognisant that the greater threat to international peace is our inability to strengthen the multilateral approach towards the resolution of the world's many problems, especially the challenge of extreme poverty, HIV and AIDS, and

child mortality. We must also continue to search for ways that promote peaceful resolution of disputes through multilateral negotiations to bring about international peace and security.

This Summit is taking place at a time when we are witnessing an increasing tendency to resort to unilateral actions in international affairs. Concepts such as "humanitarian intervention" have become smokescreens for selective and blatant interference in the internal affairs of developing countries. We have witnessed instances where the sovereignty and territorial integrity of small and weak countries have been violated by the mighty and powerful, in defiance of provisions of the United Nations Charter. Iraq today stands as a damning testimony to these excesses. It is illustrative of the extent to which the powerful can go in deceiving the world while following their selfish agendas. We ask, Mr Chairman, whether Iraqis are any happier or safer today, after their so called liberation.

Your Highness, my country, Zimbabwe, has over the last few years, been a target of these masters of deception. Since we restored land which was held by a minority to the indigenous people, my Government has come under siege, falling victim to a series of direct and indirect sanctions as well as unending machinations meant to effect regime change. In the case of the parliamentary elections held recently in my country and judged by members of the international community to be the legitimate expression of the people of Zimbabwe, these holier-than-thou detractors, who were not even present to observe the elections, have refused to accept the sovereign decision of our people.

However, despite the demonisation of my Government, as well as the illegal sanctions imposed on my country, Zimbabwe is determined to follow the path to sustained economic recovery and growth. Through our Land Reform Programme and indigenisation policy, the people of Zimbabwe now enjoy greater ownership of the national economy. We are convinced that these home-grown policies will bear fruit in our quest to achieve and

indeed surpass the Millennium Development Goals and targets.

Mr Chairman, the Group of 77 and China today stands at the crossroads. On the strength of the decisions we take at this Summit we can and should indeed influence not only the future course of our Group, but that of humanity at large. A new era of South-South cooperation has come and we must make it work better in order to achieve our vision of prosperity among the countries of the South.

I thank you.

RGM/ak