



Republic of Malawi

ADDRESS

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR ARTHUR PETER MUTHARIKA,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI**

AT

THE 73RD SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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A QUEST FOR GLOBAL PEACE: INCLUDING AFRICA

This Assembly is a representation of humanity in its fullness. Therefore, **Madame President, congratulations!** Your ascendance to this seat reminds us that *there are no minorities* in this Organization. And **we** are proud to see the United Nations led by a woman of your repute and intellectual prowess. **Congratulations!**

Ten days ago, **Madame President**, Africa lost a Malawian who was our first ambassador to this Assembly of the United Nations. **David Rubadiri** was a conscience of the African continent, and a pan-African poet who was adopted by East Africa as their son.

One month ago, **Madame President**, the world lost an African who was the second General Secretary from Africa to the United Nations. **Kofi Annan** was an African inspiring spirit of the world. Kofi Anan was a voice of peace, a voice of the voiceless, the conscience and moral arbiter of the world. He decisively carried forward the flag of peace amidst turmoil when some of us were busy **declaring war on peace**.

Today, I stand to urge this Assembly to raise high that flag of peace that my brother Kofi Anan stood for. I urge this Assembly to rise and march forward in that spirit of defending peace.

Peace is a universal human desire. We all desire peace. It must be diligently sought by us all. Peace is precious. Peace is delicate. It must be jealously guarded by us all.

We cannot sit here as a proud Assembly while out there— human communities are being driven out of their homes, forced to abandon their countries and condemned to unknown destinies of homeless survival. **Every human needs a home.**

We cannot be a proud humanity when out there - innocent children, voiceless men and vulnerable women are suffering and being killed. **Every life is precious.**

History will measure our global leadership and the legacy of this organization on the scales of how we defend the defenseless, feed the hungry, and empower the weak. History will judge our generation on how we defend human life and protect this endangered planet.

Therefore, it is our shared responsibility to seek peace in all its forms; to defend peace; and to reach out to reason with those who declare war on peace.

Madame President, the relevance of this organization rests on our ability to satisfy the needs of the people across the world. This includes Africa as I will argue in my conclusion.

Let us never doubt! The pursuit of shared responsibility implies collective inclusion. **Every nation is important.** And we all have something to offer.

That is why I began my address by reminding this Assembly that there are no minorities here. There are no small nations here. There are only nations in the United Nations.

Of course, let us admit that there will always be economic inequality of nations. And yes, **we all have something to offer** to humanity. But those with more resources and power must step out to offer more.

Let us remember! Power is not status. Power is responsibility. Leadership is not prestige. Leadership is responsibility. We must define global leadership in terms of global responsibility.

Madame President, Excellencies

We are prepared to fulfil our responsibility and obligations in the global community. Malawi remains committed to the ideals of the United Nations. Malawi ascribes to values of democratic governance, peace and security. We remain committed to participating in the efforts for maintaining international peace and security.

Malawi remains committed to promoting and protecting human rights. We remain committed to participating in international cooperation to resolve challenges that face human societies.

Malawi acknowledges the sacrifices being made by the “Blue Helmets”. The composition of the “Blue Helmets” demonstrates our commitment of the United Nations to the principle of inclusion of nations of all regions.

We are proud to be an active member in the UN peace-keeping operations across the world. For us, defending peace is a precious sacrifice.

Malawi has served in peace-keeping missions in Darfur, Lesotho, and Côte d’Ivoire. As I speak, we are part of the UN peace-keeping operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In our pursuit to promote peace, justice and effective institutions, let me announce that **the 2019 High Level Forum on SDG 16** will convene in Malawi. I welcome the opportunity and honour to host this forum. I believe this event will be a significant catalyst in our resolve to achieve SDG 16.

Madame President, Excellencies

Malawi supports the United Nations determination to galvanize international cooperation in promoting socio-economic development. We are committed to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS).

We support the UN priorities of eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions. The UN priorities are Malawi’s priorities. And

we will never relent until we have accomplished the whole hierarchy of our priorities.

We are proud of our efforts and achievements in maternal health; girl's education; youth empowerment; and gender equality.

But the plight of refugees and migrants is a concern to the people of Malawi. As Malawians, we believe refugees are part of our one human family. We believe in our collective responsibility to ensure refugees' protection, safety and access to refuge. As a result, Malawi has been hosting refugees for some decades now.

Let me also report that Malawi received a high-level UNHCR delegation this year. We are actively part of the initiative to develop a comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF), which Member States agreed upon. We have developed the concept for the framework, which is to be rolled out in Malawi within our national development strategy and our cooperation agreement with the United Nations.

On another note, Malawi is both a victim and a fighter of climate change. The consequences of climate change are real, devastating and often tragic in large scale proportions. For this reason, I would like to urge all governments, business leaders, investors and civil society to fight for the bending the curve of carbon dioxide emissions by 2020 and meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Let us move to accelerate the green transition and create more jobs, provide sustainable transport, and clean energy systems. Malawi is

doing its part by implementing various disaster risk reduction and resilience building initiatives. But we cannot do it alone. We need adequate, predictable and sustainable sources of climate financing such as the Green Climate Fund in order to support our actions.

Let me also report that my Government is endeavouring to eliminate hunger and malnutrition by 2030. Given the hostile consequences of Climate Change, food insecurity and malnutrition are serious threats in a country that still relies on subsistence rain-fed agriculture.

We believe that inclusive and resilient economic growth is key to overcoming hunger and reducing poverty. In this regard, we have in the past four years relentlessly pursued macro-economic measures that are now improving Malawi's economy.

We have stabilized the economy within four years in spite of the natural disasters of floods, drought and hunger that hit Malawi for two consecutive years.

Within four troubled years, we have reduced **inflation** from **24 per cent** to **single digit**. We have reduced **interest rates** from **25 per cent** to **16 per cent**. We have taken our **import cover** from the lowest point to the highest point in our economic history. Our import cover has risen from **below 2 months** to **6 months**. We have made **local currency stable** and **predictable**.

Above all, I found **GDP Growth Rate** at **2.4 per cent** when I started leading Malawi four years ago. Now we expect growth **4 per cent** in our

2018/2019 financial year. And we expect this growth to rise to **6 percent** in 2019.

We are improving these macro-economic because a bad economy is injustice to its citizens. At the same time, we continue focusing on the justice of specific sectors of our society.

We are fighting against violence against women and girls. I believe no human society can meaningfully develop while marginalizing its women. Development must always be inclusive.

With support from the United Nations and other development partners, particularly the European Union (EU), Malawi will from 2019 implement the Spotlight Initiative in a bid to eliminate violence against women and girls.

Again, no society can progress without its Youth. Malawi is therefore implementing a number of Youth programs. This includes a skills development program that involves establishing community technical colleges.

We are empowering the Youth with skills for them to create jobs and businesses for themselves and others. We believe no society can develop without a skilled labour force. Our urgent need is to train the trainers in this Youth program.

Let me also add that Malawi believes that citizens of every nation must have legal identities. Malawi has fulfilled this principle. Today, over 95 percent of my people aged 16 and above have national identity cards.

And we are in the process of integrating the National ID to be used in education, finance, agriculture, security, social welfare and other public services.

Madame President, Excellencies

Malawi will always play the team member of the international community. We support the UN initiatives in fighting global systemic threats and challenges, including terrorism, and climate change.

We support the UN Development System (UNDS) reforms. As such, Malawi welcomes the adoption of:-

- a) Resolution A/72/279 on the repositioning of the UN Development System; and
- b) Resolution A/72/305 on review of the implementation of General Assembly Resolution 68/1 to strengthen the Economic and Social Council.

We strongly support the Common African Position calling for 2 Permanent Seats with Veto and 5 Non-Permanent Seats for Africa. Why should some nations be afraid of losing power by offering decision making space to Africa when you don't lose power by accommodating

other continents? Is Africa that much of a threat? This segregation of Africans must come to an end.

Why should we allow this organisation to be accused of hypocrisy - that we preach democracy everywhere when we are not democratic enough to accommodate almost **one third of our own membership in this Assembly?**

Madame President, let me conclude by commending the ironical wisdom in the theme we chose this year. Let us prove that we can live up to the demands of this theme. And I speak for Africa!

We cannot talk about shared responsibility while we marginalise Africans and deny them full participation in our decisions. We cannot talk about global leadership of the United Nations when African leadership is not on the decision-making tables. In any political system, we cannot claim relevance to the people that we deny.

A time has come to make the United Nations relevant to all people. A time has come to show global leadership that is inclusive of all nations. A time has come to pledge shared responsibilities together with Africa and the rest of the world.

And a time has come for this Assembly to listen to the voice of Africa. Let us listen...!

I thank you for your attention.