

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT OF H.E. HIFIKEPUNYE
POHAMBAMBA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF NAMIBIA AT THE 66TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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**Check Against Delivery*

Your Excellency, Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the 66th 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 Head of Delegations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to congratulate you and your country Qatar, on your election as President of this Session. With your wisdom and experience, I am confident that you will successfully steer the proceedings of this august Assembly. I assure you of my delegation's cooperation and support.

In the same vein, I would like to convey our appreciation to H.E. Dr. Joseph Deiss for his commendable efforts and leadership during his Presidency of the 65th Session. I also congratulate H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon on his re-election as Secretary-General and for his leadership of the Organization.

Mr. President,

I commend you for choosing, as the theme of our present debate: "the importance of mediation in the Pacific Settlement of Disputes". Peaceful settlement of disputes as provided for in Chapter Six of the UN Charter is an important principle that the international community should uphold in finding solutions to conflicts around the world.

As members of the international community, we must demonstrate our commitment to mediation. This will help restore confidence in the lofty ideals upon which the United Nations was founded.

Mr. President,

The year 2011 has witnessed profound social and political transformations in some parts of the African Continent. Perhaps, at no time since the Independence Decade of the 1960's, the decolonization of my own country, Namibia and the defeat of apartheid in South Africa in the 1990's, has Africa been the scene of so much pressure for the realization of the legitimate aspirations of its people, for democratic and accountable governance.

The Government of Namibia recognizes the legitimacy of the peaceful demands for democratic changes in the sister countries such as Tunisia and Egypt. It is of paramount importance that the demands for democratic changes be locally driven and owned, but not be used as a pretext by foreign powers to undermine the fundamental principle of sovereignty and non-intervention in the internal affairs of independent states. This cardinal principle constitutes the core essence of the United Nations. To maintain its unique legitimacy and universal credibility in the eyes of the vast majority of humanity, the United Nations should respect and uphold this principle.

The United Nations, which supported the decolonization of Africa, should now not be seen to be reversing or compromising on this principle by opening up the continent to new threats of external forces.

Never in the history of United Nations has the sanctity of the principle of non-intervention been so compromised as we have witnessed recently in Libya. The intervention in Libya by powerful members of the United Nations Security Council represents a mortal danger for the security of weak countries.

The military intervention in Libya by foreign powers must remind Africa of the infamous 1884/1885 Berlin Conference when Africa was carved up by imperial powers.

We are gravely concerned that all efforts by the African Union to help the Libyan parties find a peaceful negotiated solution based on the AU roadmap were ignored and undermined.

Following recent political changes in some African countries, it is now vitally important to restore order, promote national reconciliation and cohesion and begin urgently to address the practical challenges of pervasive poverty, especially among the youth. Respect for justice, fundamental human rights, the rule of law and good governance should be pre-conditions for lasting peace.

Selective prosecution of the defeated opponents is bound to widen and deepen internal divisions and perpetuate political instability. Unless genuine reconciliation is achieved, peace, economic recovery and development are unattainable. Therefore, the imperative need for genuine reconciliation must not become the unintended casualty of the rush for retribution under guise of fighting impunity. This should hold true for Cote d'Ivoire and the countries in North Africa that have recently experienced social and political upheavals.

Mr. President,

On the 9th of July 2011, the Republic of South Sudan attained her independence after many years of a bloody conflict. We unanimously welcomed the new sister country to this august Assembly on 14th July this year as a free and sovereign state.

The peaceful manner in which the independence of South Sudan was achieved, demonstrated statesmanship and wisdom of the leaders who chose the path of peace and mediation. We call on the leaders of both countries to recommit themselves towards resolving all outstanding issues through peaceful means.

I welcome His Excellency and Brother, President Salva Kirr Mayardit and wish him well as he leads the people of South Sudan in building a new, united and prosperous nation.

Mr. President,

Namibia calls for the immediate implementation of the UN Settlement Plan and relevant UN resolutions, leading to the holding of a free and fair referendum in Western Sahara,

With regard to Palestine, I reaffirm our full and unequivocal support for the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people to achieve their inalienable right to self-determination and national independence. The UN should, and must fulfill its legal obligation to assist the people of Palestine achieve statehood.

The overwhelming majority of the Member States of this Assembly have for many years, expressed serious concern over the continuing economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. This embargo continues to cause severe hardships to the people of that country. We, therefore, call for an immediate and unconditional lifting of the embargo against the Republic of Cuba.

Mr. President,

Namibia welcomes the recent signing of the Road Map by the Malagasy political stakeholders, with facilitation of the SADC Mediator. The signing of the Road Map paves the way to bring an end to the political crisis and return that country to constitutional order and democratic rule. We call on the United Nations and the international community to support these efforts and become actively engaged with a view to finding a lasting political solution in Madagascar.

Mr. President,

Today, the people of Somalia are not only faced with the political uncertainty but also a severe drought and famine which have resulted in a humanitarian catastrophe. Namibia has joined the international community by contributing food supplies to the people of Somalia as part of the international efforts to address this crisis.

Mr. President,

Namibia commends the initiatives to convene a number of high-level meetings over the past three days dealing with numerous challenges and issues facing human kind. Namibia attaches great importance to sustainable development and the search for the best ways to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change. The effects of climate change are real and are acutely felt in every part of the globe. In Namibia for the past three consecutive years, we have experienced devastating floods which negatively impacted on our development plans. I take this opportunity, once again, to thank those members of the international community who responded positively to our emergency appeal to assist the affected communities in our country.

While many parts of the world have suffered from the devastating effects of natural disasters, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face a much bigger problem. The inhabitants of these States live in constant and real fear of their lands and habitat being submerged by the ocean as a result of rising sea waters caused by climate change.

Mr. President,

Next year, the UN will hold a crucial conference in Rio de Janeiro titled Rio +20 to determine our shared responsibility towards the future of our planet. The UN Framework Convention on

Climate Change remains the appropriate intergovernmental forum to negotiate climate-related agreements.

It is in our collective interest to ensure that the Seventh Session of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP17) is concluded successfully in Durban, South Africa, during December this year. This should set the tone for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), which should assist us to determine our shared responsibility towards the future of our planet.

Mr. President,

My delegation is concerned about the lack of movement on world trade negotiations, especially the impasse on the Doha Round negotiations. It is imperative that we exert all efforts to make progress in this process. The Government of Namibia remains of the conviction that the principle of fair and open trade be upheld by all nations, big and small.

Mr. President,

The reform of the United Nation system, especially Security Council has been painfully slow. I wish to underline Namibia's firm conviction that a democratic, representative and transparent Security Council will serve all of humanity better. This is consistent with the African common position. I call on you Mr. President to dedicate your efforts and ensure that the process gains momentum. This would enable our Organization to respond effectively to the manifold challenges of our time.

It is incumbent upon all Member States to work together to strengthen our Organization and guarantee international peace and security, advance sustainable economic and social development for a fairer and more just world for all.

I thank you.