



STATEMENT

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

OF ZIMBABWE AND CHAIRMAN OF SADC,

COMRADE R.G. MUGABE,

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE 2ND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON

LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES,

VIENNA, AUSTRIA: 3RD NOVEMBER, 2014.

Your Excellency, President of the United Nations
General Assembly, Mr Sam Kutesa,

Your Excellency, Secretary-General of the United
Nations, Mr Ban Ki-Moon,

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

At the outset, I would like to express my delegation's sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Austria for hosting this important conference and for the gracious hospitality extended to us all in this beautiful city of Vienna.

I welcome the convening of this Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries at this critical

juncture in the preparations for the post – 2015 Development Agenda. At this Conference, we will not only review what has transpired since the Ministerial Meeting in Almaty in 2003, but, more importantly, to chart the contours of the road we plan to traverse in the next ten years.

Your Excellency,

In the current globalised world, replete with many competing challenges and needs, there is a real danger that those of the weakest members of the community might be ignored, overlooked, or accorded scant attention. It is reassuring to note that the Almaty Programme of Action, adopted in 2003 in order to address the special development challenges faced by Landlocked Developing Countries, has contributed to creating global awareness about the challenges of this specific group of countries. We encourage the United Nations to continue to raise awareness of the needs of this category of countries through

advocacy and mainstreaming of the conclusions of this conference in its development work.

Your Excellency,

Eleven years ago, the Almaty Programme of Action was adopted with the aim of addressing the special development needs and challenges of Landlocked Developing Countries within a global framework for Transit Transport Cooperation. While the Almaty Programme of Action managed to bring the special development needs and challenges of Landlocked Developing Countries on the international agenda, it suffered the limitation of being a sectoral programme with a predominant focus on transit and transport policies. In our opinion, it thus lacked a holistic and comprehensive approach to addressing the special development challenges facing Landlocked Developing Countries.

It is therefore our view that the development challenges facing the Landlocked Developing Countries can only be effectively addressed through a new Programme of Action that is holistic, comprehensive and result-oriented. We concur that, in addition to the five priority areas contained in the Almaty Programme of Action, the new Programme of Action must include structural economic transformation, means of implementation, and attention to new and emerging challenges.

Your Excellency,

Many Landlocked Developing Countries have remained suppliers of raw materials with limited value addition capacity for too long a time. This must change. It is time that Landlocked Developing Countries move up the value chain and trade in high value manufactured products if they are to register real and sustainable development. In Zimbabwe, we have, with this objective in mind, introduced the Zimbabwe Agenda for

Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET) which revolves around four key clusters. Among them is a cluster on Value Addition and Beneficiation of the country's abundant natural resources. This same determination to fundamentally transform our economies is shared by our brothers and sisters in the region in the context of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In this regard, the SADC Heads of State and Government have agreed to convene an Extraordinary Summit in April 2015 which will be devoted exclusively to the theme of value addition and beneficiation of the natural resources abundant in our countries and region.

Your Excellency,

Trade, if conducted in a fair, transparent and balanced manner, can contribute to the growth of all economies. Sadly, for too long, the trade volumes of Landlocked Developing Countries have remained the lowest, mainly due to high transport costs,

weak industrial base, and logistical impediments. Trade facilitation is therefore essential in reducing the cost of trade for Landlocked Developing Countries.

We therefore call upon development partners to fulfil their commitments to provide aid for trade assistance to Landlocked Developing Countries and to increase its disbursement. The speedy and full implementation of the Bali Package, adopted at the ninth WTO Ministerial Meeting in December 2013, has the potential to help Landlocked Developing Countries reap the full benefits of international trade.

Your Excellency,

Landlocked Developing Countries, like all developing economies, remain particularly vulnerable to the recurrent multiple crises which have been a feature of the current cycle of

globalization. These countries have been pummeled by the global financial, economic, food and energy crises, climate change as well as other natural disasters. The impacts of those crises have been particularly severe due to the absence of mitigatory and adjustment mechanisms especially at the global level. Zimbabwe, therefore, calls upon development partners to facilitate access to financial and technological resources by Landlocked Developing Countries at concessional terms in order to help them build resilience against new and emerging challenges.

Your Excellency,

Our group of countries finds encouragement in the knowledge that we do not have to face our unique challenges alone. We have partners to call upon to complement and augment our own efforts and initiatives. In that regard, global partnerships are vital in supporting LLDCs to overcome their development

challenges, in particular, their marginalization in international trading systems.

While the Almaty Programme of Action provided an international framework for such partnerships, Zimbabwe calls for reinforced global partnerships in the post-2015 development era. We need global partnerships that are guided by the fundamental principles of country ownership, solidarity, common but differentiated responsibilities, and respective capabilities, as well as domestic participation and accountability. Zimbabwe stresses the need for global partnerships that reflect the priorities of LLDCs, for it is only such partnerships that can be relevant and responsive to the realities and exigencies of the countries concerned.

Your Excellency,

Regional and sub-regional integration and cooperation between LLDCs, in particular, trade integration and transit cooperation, is key in facilitating the integration of LLDCs into the global trading and value chain system. Equally important is the need to strengthen South-South and Triangular Cooperation in order to enhance our participation in the global economy. We urge development partners to scale up support to Triangular cooperation initiatives, with a focus on building productive capacity and private sector development.

Your Excellency,

Multilateralism, mutual respect, and genuine cooperation, should be part of the basis of relations among states. We are concerned that unilateral coercive measures continue to be part of the policy instruments used by some countries in contemporary inter-state relations. The illegal sanctions, imposed by both the USA and the European Union against

Zimbabwe, remain the greatest obstacle to my country's efforts to fully implement the Almaty Programme of Action. They undermine Zimbabwe's full participation in world trade and have significantly inhibited my country's capacity to build and maintain economic, social and transit infrastructure.

This has had an impact on other countries who rely on Zimbabwe's transit facilities for their imports and exports. Zimbabwe demands the immediate and unconditional lifting of the heinous sanctions. It is our wish to have constructive relations, with all States, based on mutual respect and cooperation.

Your Excellency,

In conclusion, Zimbabwe stresses the need for the post-2015 development agenda to take into account the specific needs and

challenges facing the Landlocked Developing Countries. It is our expectation, therefore, that the conclusions of our deliberations at this Conference will find their place in the proposed Sustainable Development Goals.

I thank you.

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