

**67<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
*(New York, 18 September to 1 October 2012)*

**GENERAL DEBATE**

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**Statement by H.E Paul BIYA, President of the Republic  
of Cameroon, read by the Minister of External Relations,  
Pierre MOUKOKO MBONJO, 26 September 2012**

- Mr. President,

Permit me first of all to extend to you my sincere and warm congratulations on your election as President of the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly.

Your experience at the helm of your country's diplomacy gives me the feeling that like your predecessor, Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-NASSER, you will steer our discussions successfully, with the necessary skills and talents.

To Mr. Al-NASSER precisely, I would like once again, to express my country's appreciation for his action as President of the 66<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

Lastly, I wish to salute the presence at this debate of Mr. Ban Ki-MOON, Secretary-General of the United Nations Organization, and thank him for his devotedness to the ideals of our Organization.

- Mr. President,
- Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
- Ministers and Ambassadors,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

The current year has been marked by an intense activity of our Organization. Many important meetings have been held to discuss major topical issues and consider the most appropriate actions to address them.

Permit me to recall two of such meetings.

First, there is the Rio Conference on sustainable development, which took place in June 2012, to commemorate 20 years of the emblematic Earth Summit. This meeting enabled us to define what future we want to bequeath our children.

I am pleased to note that the common vision adopted by that meeting recognized the need to introduce more economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development at all levels of our action.

Indeed, if we must bequeath future generations a liveable world, the Green Economy, in my view, is the most efficient means of ensuring development that is capable of both satisfying the needs of the people and preserving the environment.

Cameroon for its part has already initiated actions in that regard. We intend to step up efforts towards safeguarding our natural capital, seeking low carbon-intensity solutions and promoting sustainable modes of production and consumption.

In our view, the switch towards Green Economy should be progressive and supported by the international community. In that regard, the document adopted at the end of the Rio Conference urged the international community to honour the numerous commitments to support Africa in sustainable development, notably through the transfer of appropriate technologies. International financial institutions and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) are called upon to strengthen their actions in that regard. This is significant progress.

The second important meeting worth recalling is the 13<sup>th</sup> quadrennial session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development that was held in Qatar. This session which received less media coverage than the Rio Conference was aimed at correcting certain flaws in globalization and refocusing it on development.

Globalization, in terms of its contribution to trade, economic and technological development, as well as the rapprochement of cultures, can be considered positive. However, as it remains poorly managed and poorly regulated, it could not but trigger the economic crises that have relegated the problems of under development to the background.

UNCTAD emerged from the Doha meeting stronger in its trade and development role. This, as well, is commendable.

- Mr.President,
- Excellencies,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since 2008, there has been a slowdown in global economic activities.

Industrialized economies, whether in Europe, the United States or Japan, are to varying degrees facing serious difficulties: slow growth, or even recession, rising debt burden and government deficit, external trade imbalance, and so on. Even emerging countries which recorded high growth rates are witnessing a slowdown. As concerns developing countries, while they continue to register moderate growth, they remain worried about the effects of a further decline in the global economy and the consequences of any spread.

I stated earlier on that while globalization has some positive aspects, it has failed to attain its key objective, namely the harmonious functioning of the global economy and finance, taking into account the interests of all parties concerned. This relative failure has brought to light the urgent need for regulation. However, for the time being, no one knows exactly when and how such regulation will be carried out.

For their parts, major groupings such as the G20 (where industrialized countries constitute the majority) or the WTO have on several occasions analyzed the global economic situation and envisaged solutions with a view to restoring major balances. Yet, it should be recognized that due to the magnitude of the problem and lack of available resources, coupled with the challenges facing developed countries, action has not always followed.

From this viewpoint, the international community seems to be going through a period of uncertainty and anxiety. Every country is conscious of the need to take urgent and consistent measures but, preoccupied with its own problems, seems paralyzed by the decisions to be taken. The obvious risk is a return to protectionism, the tendencies of which are already perceptible. Predictably, they would offer only temporary relief and, in the longer term, worsen the recession.

African countries and Cameroon in particular, that witnessed a prolonged crisis characterized by GDP decline, stringent discipline of

Structural Adjustment Plans and aggravated social problems are well placed to evaluate the consequences of economic decline.

That is why they pin their hopes on broad-based consultations for a comprehensive regulation of economic and financial flows that would take into account the situation of the different categories of countries and offer diverse prospects, amongst which international solidarity.

Cameroon for its part has learned from the current situation. Thanks to the sacrifices made by its population and having been relieved of its debt burden by external partners, Cameroon's economy has recovered and is now focusing on the exploitation of its natural resources. Endowed by nature, my country intends to develop its agriculture in order to strengthen its food self-sufficiency and stimulate exports. Moreover, conscious of the fact that its industrialization hinges on the availability of adequate energy, Cameroon has rolled out a programme to harness its huge hydroelectric potential. Lastly, several mining projects along with adequate road transport and port infrastructure are under way.

In so doing, we hope to progress towards becoming an emerging country and improving the living conditions of our people.

Mr. President, permit me at this juncture to express my appreciation for the choice of the theme of our General Debate, namely "adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations by peaceful means".

This theme which falls squarely in line with that of last year, permits us to consider the Charter of the United Nations and recall the values it promotes, which values must guide our actions.

Permit me to recall the fundamental principles of our Organization, among others, peacekeeping and international security through the adoption of efficient collective measures and settlement of disputes or situations that are likely to disrupt peace, through peaceful means, in accordance with the principles of international justice and international law.

This reminder may be useful, at a time when tensions are persisting in the Sahel, particularly in Mali, in the two Sudans which are finding it difficult to stabilize their relations and in Syria, which is torn apart by an internal conflict. These tensions manifest the risk of a resort

to the use of force to find solutions. Such use of force could be justified in the following situations:

- spread of international terrorism ;
- violation of human rights and democracy ;
- threats to the security of persons ;
- violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

However, before reaching such extremes, peaceful means should be the priority in the settlement of disputes, hence avoiding the vicious circle of violence and response. I am not advocating any idea of angelism. There are situations where military intervention can be inevitable. But it is our responsibility to reduce this eventuality, as much as possible, and provide maximum safeguards.

In any case, it is evident that the most desired mode of settlement of disputes remains prevention and negotiation.

- Mr. President,

For most of world opinion, the United Nations Organization embodies the most noble human values and hope for a future that is consistent with the ideals of peace, security and development, as enshrined in its Charter.

Let us strive to ensure that such hope is not shattered yet again.

Thank you for your kind attention.