



STATEMENT

BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
ZIMBABWE,
HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. E. D. MNANGAGWA**

AT THE

**76TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY.**

23 SEPTEMBER 2021

**Your Excellency Abdullah Shahid, President of the
76th Session of the General Assembly;**

**Your Excellency Antonio Guterres, Secretary
General of the United Nations;**

Majesties;

Excellencies, Heads of State and Government;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Allow me, Your Excellency, to extend my heartfelt congratulations to you on your election as President of the 76th Session of the General Assembly. We are confident that your vast experience will help advance the implementation of the global agenda during this Session.

I also pay tribute to the outgoing President, Mr. Volkan Bozkir, for providing outstanding leadership during the 75th Session, at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted the work of our Organization.

Allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. António Guterres, on his election for a second term. My country's stands ready to work closely with him and other Member States to achieve our shared goal of a better life for all.

The Seventy Sixth Session in convening against the backdrop of the persistent COVID 19 pandemic. However all hope is not lost. Drawing from the collective milestones achieved to date, enhanced multilateralism and unity of purpose remain critical in mitigating this global health emergency. The hoarding and inequitable distribution with the resultant uneven vaccination patterns across the globe is not acceptable. Vaccine nationalism is self-defeating and contrary to the mantra that 'no one is safe until everyone is safe. Whether in the global North or South, rich or poor, old or young, all people of the world deserve access to vaccines.

The pandemic has demonstrated the urgent need to build resilient economies and societies that are able to cope in times of shocks and hazards. The pandemic has necessitated the need for us to build back better and greener, to emerge stronger.

The theme for the Seventy Sixth Session: “***Building Resilience Through Hope - to Recover from COVID-19, Rebuild Sustainably, Respond to the Needs of the Planet, Respect the Rights of People and Revitalize the United Nations***”, resonates well with the needs of the world at this juncture. Together we can indeed conquer the challenges facing humanity and realize a sustainable future that leaves no one behind.

We must restore dignity and hope, particularly for our women, youth and the vulnerable, who look to us for inspiration and assurance that their well-being and future remains at the core of all our endeavours.

Mr President;

This year's high-level meetings mark important dialogues at the heart of sustainable development in its three dimensions. The Biodiversity Summit and the Second Global Sustainable Transport Conference, as well as the Nutrition for Growth Summit, all lined-up this year, complement our efforts towards a healthy planet.

Green energy is an enabler for building back better and is crucial in the direct achievement of SDGs, while playing a key role in mitigating climate change. The High-Level Dialogue on Energy Dialogue on energy sets the stage for exploring viable renewable and green energy solutions. As we do so, let us link economic growth with the accelerated transition to net-zero emission for a climate-resilient future.

My country and parts of the Southern African region continue to experience the devastating impacts of climate change, ranging from cyclone-induced floods, recurrent

droughts and shorter rain seasons, hotter summers and colder winters. This is in spite of the fact that our Continent is the least polluter.

COP26 in Glasgow must therefore be about action and the fulfillment of decisions of the past. In addition, concrete financial support is essential to combat climate change beyond mere rhetoric. The 2030 Agenda remains our shared roadmap to achieve the future we all want.

For us in Zimbabwe, eradicating poverty and eliminating hunger remain a top priority. Climate change and resultant erratic weather patterns, growing populations, coupled with the effects of the pandemic on food supply chains, demand a shift from our traditional food production, processing, distribution and consumption systems.

My Government has established a firm foundation for sustained food production through the land redistribution programme as well as increased support for communal and small-holder farmers. This has led to broader and sustainable incomes for the majority of people living in rural areas who now contribute to the increased levels of household and national food and nutrition security.

The United Nations Food Systems Summit provides a welcome platform for new actions, innovative solutions and plans to deliver progress across all of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

Mr. President,

Zimbabwe launched Vision 2030, aimed at improving the lives of our people, sustainably managing the environment and ensuring that **no one is left behind**. The pursuit of this inclusive and transformative vision has

seen the creation of more decent jobs, reduction of inequalities and access to quality social services.

Expanded new economic opportunities for all citizens are yielding positive results across all sectors of the economy. The multi-pronged reforms we are undertaking has seen us being one of the fastest movers in the World Bank Ease of Doing Business Index.

Zimbabwe presented the second Voluntary National Review during the July 2021 High Level Political Forum. Remarkable progress has been registered towards universal health coverage and the creation of a competence based education system which vaults innovation for a knowledge driven economy. Higher agriculture production and productivity, through improved land and water utilization as well as the adoption of climate smart agriculture is being promoted.

The Voluntary National Review further highlighted progress made in supporting productive employment, decent work and the formalization of the informal sector. My administration continues to entrench democracy constitutionalism and the rule of law through sound legislation as well as fair and impartial administration of justice. This is indicative of our strides to achieve sustainable development by 2030. We remain available to share experiences for mutual benefit.

My Government recognizes and applauds the complementary role that the private sector, development partners, civil society organizations and other stakeholders in the realisation of SDGs in Zimbabwe.

In speaking of challenges faced in achieving SDGs the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the vulnerability of our economy which is already crippled by the adverse effects of unilateral illegal sanctions imposed on my

country. This has further worsened our capacity to respond to the pandemic for the good of our citizens.

I am pleased to highlight that my Government has approved the visit to Zimbabwe by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Negative Impact of the Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Enjoyment of Human Rights in October 2021. This will afford the Special Rapporteur an opportunity to witness firsthand, the devastating impact of these illegal sanctions on my country.

We reiterate our call for the urgent unconditional removal of these illegal sanctions.

Zimbabwe remains grateful to the SADC region, the African Union and other progressive nations who continue to stand with us and add their voices to the call for the unconditional removal of these unwarranted and unjustified illegal sanctions. We are committed to engagement, re-engagement and peaceful co-existence and to be a friend to all and an enemy to none as we build

equal partnership for win-win cooperation and a common future.

Mr President;

The state of global peace and security is a cause for concern. Terrorism, illicit flow of small arms and light weapons, transnational organized crime, cybercrime and illicit financial flows among other aspects, continue to impede our march towards the realisation of sustainable peace, security and stability.

The recent acts of terrorism in our SADC region are constant reminders of our vulnerability to the scourge of terrorism which has become one of Africa's greatest security threats. African Nations need to be capacitated to effectively counter this vice along with the Continental flagship programme on "Silencing the Guns" through, "African solutions for African problems.

As we commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons during this High-level week, let us be mindful of the need to build trust based on international law, to realize the shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

We remain alarmed by the global rise in racial tensions, violence and hate crimes. Twenty years after the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the socio-economic and political structures that encourage, promote and justify racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances must be torn down.

The recent adoption of the resolution establishing the Permanent Forum of People of African Descent is commendable. The Forum must inspire all of us to build a world which harnesses our racial diversities, for global peace, harmony and sustainable development.

Respecting and upholding human rights is the obligation of all States as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Equally, self-determination and independence are fundamental rights that should be enjoyed by all people. We therefore call for the full implementation of United Nations Resolutions to end all forms of colonialism and occupation.

Mr. President,

Based on the principles of sovereign equality and independence of States, the United Nations Organization must be fair, just and anchored on multilateralism, inclusivity and transparency, to best serve the collective interests of all members. The reform of the Security Council must be expedited. My country equally supports the ongoing efforts to revitalize the General Assembly.

The encroachment of other UN organs on the mandate and competence of the General Assembly is of concern.

Finally, the increased challenges facing the world today call for stronger solidarity and a renewed commitment to strengthen multilateralism, as a viable mechanism for achieving and maintaining peace, security, equality, justice, sustainable economic development and the protection of our environment.

I thank you.