



MALAWI'S STATEMENT TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

HIGH LEVEL SESSION

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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

**BY HONORABLE TITUS SONGISO MVALO
MINISTER OF JUSTICE**

24TH FEBRUARY, 2021

Madam President of the Human Rights Council, Madam High Commissioner, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to address the Human Rights Council on behalf of Malawi, as a member and allow me to first congratulate Ambassador Nazhat Shameen Khan, for her election as president of the Human Rights Council. I wish you much success.

Malawi also appreciates the efforts of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, who continued to raise her voice on the pertinent human rights issues.

Madam President, Malawi is honored to be a member of the Human Rights Council and ready to serve at the Human Rights Council as our mandate starts this year to 2023.

Malawi is a firm believer in multilateralism and as a member of the Human Rights Council, we shall uphold and protect fundamental international human rights, values and system. As members of the global community, we are much more united in common values as human beings endowed with rights and responsibilities by our creator. All nations large and small, powerful and not so powerful should enjoy equal treatment as we shape the United Nations that we want.

Madam President, the current Covid-19 pandemic which has spared no people, no nation and no continent is a gruesome reminder that we indeed are human beings with common frailties. To defeat this scourge, we need united effort, sharing expertise, knowledge and resources.

Madam President, Fighting the pandemic is a daunting task and collective efforts and solidarity is important. Fair and equitable access to the vaccine and resources would be important on the global level. In a quest to fight the pandemic, Malawi adopted restrictive measures in order to protect human rights and human health in declaring a state of national disaster on 12 January, 2021 due to COVID-19

The pandemic has exposed vulnerable groups of Malawians and therefore, the government is assessing the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the health, education, economy and the labour market in Malawi to identify reforms that government could undertake to stimulate the economy and protect livelihoods. Several policy recommendations including: the need to enhance interventions towards social protection programmes and other fiscal bailouts targeting workers and small-scale businesses in the informal economy, cash transfers, providing support to people with underlying health conditions such as HIV/AIDS, and implementing labour market reforms have been proposed.

Madam President, Malawi recognizes that the founders of United Nations 75 years ago set-in motion a path of multilateralism in solving global challenges. While the shape of the United Nations has guided us and served us well over the years, reality should not be lost to us that the world of 1945 is radically different from today's world. Therefore, all traces of imperialism or colonialism should not be prevalent today in any form or shape.

Madam President, in the past year, Malawi has demonstrated that a people's firm resolve is adequate to thwart any scheme aimed at derailing democracy and the will of the people.

The administration of President Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera was birthed in June 2020 on the wings of our people's desire to create a Malawi we dreamt of at our independence right in 1964 and at the dawn of the second coming of multipartyism in 1994 which had hitherto been proscribed. This is a Malawi not only politically free and independent but also on a firm path to social, economic development, free from poverty, tribalism, nepotism and corruption.

Madam President, despite the challenges of Covid-19 pandemic, attacks on persons with albinism have resurfaced. However, we are confident that the combination of a firm constitutional framework, a robust legal and judicial structure, a thriving civil society, determined law enforcers and a people driven for a better future will help us fight and defeat this scourge.

Madam President, Malawi has recently launched a national development vision called Malawi 2063. It is aligned to the Agenda 2030 and Africa's Agenda 2063. It is designed to propel Malawi to social economic prosperity.

Madam President, as a member of this Council, member of the United Nations, and member of the African Union, we pledge to work with all in the face of man's common rights and threats. We call for equality of nations and mutual respect even as we may hold different views on some issues.

We will clear our treaty body reporting backlog with the United Nations by the end of this year. We have recently submitted our 8th periodic report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and will soon submit reports on International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD).

Madam President, Malawi calls upon the Council and United Nations treaty bodies to continue offering technical support as we enhance the capacity of our human rights institutions such as the Human Rights Section in the Ministry of Justice and the Malawi Human Rights Commission. Later in this Session our Third Cycle Universal Periodic Review report will be adopted. The accepted recommendations represent what we as a nation believe in and are eager to promote to shape our human rights future.

We are determined to be an active and effective member of the Council. We shall, therefore, constructively engage and remain strongly resolute towards a common goal in our role as Human Rights Council member in the promotion of Human Rights.

God bless you all.