



Republic of Malawi

**PRESS BRIEFING**

**ON THE**

**RETURN OF HER EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT**

**MRS. JOYCE BANDA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF**

**MALAWI**

**FROM THE 67<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF HEADS OF STATE AND**

**GOVERNMENT HELD IN NEW YORK,**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**2<sup>nd</sup> OCTOBER, 2012**

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Her Excellency the President, Mrs. Joyce Banda, has just returned from New York, United States of America, where she attended the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Debate of Heads of State and Government of the United Nations General Assembly. The General Debate of the Heads of State and Government was officially opened on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2012 under the theme: *“Bringing about adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations by peaceful means”*. The session ran from 25<sup>th</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2012.

## **B. THE 67<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY GENERAL DEBATE**

The official opening of the general debate was attended by the UN Secretary General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and the President of the Session, His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremić of Serbia, among many world leaders.

In their opening remarks, both the Secretary General and the Assembly President, urged world leaders to overcome divisions and wilful blindness to global challenges, before it was too late to effectively address them. They cited widespread insecurity, deepening inequality, and the impact of climate change, as some of the significant challenges that need concerted effort, joint action and political will to tackle . They, therefore, urged the leaders to find a tenacity of purpose, and the courage to master the challenges ahead.

**C. ADDRESS BY HER EXCELLENCY MRS. JOYCE BANDA TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

In her maiden address to the Assembly, Her Excellency President Mrs. Joyce Banda, commended the President of the General Assembly on the theme of the Assembly, as it offered an opportunity for world leaders to reflect on the devastating effects of conflicts on the lives of millions of people, particularly women and children, and that the impact of these conflicts knows no geographical boundaries. She then told the world leaders that achieving sustainable development for all was the best way to ensure a peaceful and stable world, She also bemoaned the lack of social and health facilities in

Malawi, hampering full potential for acceptable social development of children and the youth.

In this respect, Her Excellency the President shared her vision of transforming Malawi by eradication of poverty through economic growth and wealth creation. She mentioned that Malawi aims to do this by transforming the structure of the economy, promotion of the private sector to accelerate job creation and protection of the vulnerable, in compliance with the economic recovery programme that the Government adopted upon her ascendancy to the high office . She informed the Assembly that the inclusive National Dialogue on the Economy that was held within the first 100 days of her presidency, narrowed down five (5) priority sectors within the medium- term national development framework, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II) and these are Energy, Tourism, Agriculture, Mining and Infrastructure Development, and that central to these priorities is the emphasis on delivery, through partnership with the private sector. She called for support on the two Initiatives that she launched, viz., the **Presidential Initiative on Maternal Health and Safe Motherhood**; and the **Presidential**

**Initiative on Poverty and Hunger Reduction**, to fast-track the interventions needed to address the social needs of the disadvantaged groups.

At the multilateral level, Her Excellency the President drew the attention of the Assembly on three (3) issues that have a significant bearing on most of the Least Developed countries (LDCs): 1) the full implementation of the Istanbul Declaration and its Programme of Action, which was adopted in Turkey in May, 2011; 2) the implementation of the recent outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Brazil, where international consensus emerged and agreement was reached on important areas of sustainable development; and 3) the reform of the UN Security Council, particularly, the demands of the African Group as stipulated in the *Ezulwini Consensus* which calls for the allocation of, at least, two (2) seats in the permanent category and five (5) seats in the non-permanent category for Africa, since it is the single largest region within the United Nations without permanent presentation and under-represented in the non-permanent category in the Council.

## **D. OTHER MEETINGS HELD ALONG THE MARGINS OF THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

In pursuit of her short-term economic recovery programme for Malawi and in accordance with the vision for the socio-economic development of the country, Her Excellency the President also held several bilateral meetings with other Heads of State and Government, the UN Secretary General and senior UN officials, high level dignitaries of the United States, and some multinational organizations. The President was a panelist in some of these high level meetings. The outcome of these meetings has a direct positive and significant bearing on Malawi, as Her Excellency the President managed to seek the much needed assistance from them.

### ***Her Excellency the President had the following engagements:***

1. Bilateral meetings with His Excellency Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General; Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, UNFPA Executive Director; and Mr. Martin Mongwanja, the Deputy Executive Director UNICEF;

2. Was a Keynote Speaker at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference, held under the theme: *"Africa Rising: A Continent of Opportunities."*
3. Was a panelist at the Clinton Global Initiative Topic Dinner under the theme *"Africa at the turning Point"*
4. Attended the Clinton Global Initiative Annual meeting held under the theme: *"The Early Years: An Irresistible Investment Opportunity"* (*Early Childhood Development*);
5. Attended, together with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, the Millennium Challenge Corporation event held under the theme: *"Holding Governments and Institutions Accountable for Gender Equality"*;
6. Bilateral meeting with Mrs. Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State, and co-hosted, with Secretary Clinton, a Forum under the theme *"Feed the Future: Partnering with Civil Society"*
7. Bilateral meeting with Mr. Daniel Yohannes, Chief Executive Officer for the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC);
8. Meeting with the Blanchard Family, 100x Development Foundation;

9. Met with Mr. Paul Schickler, President of Du Pont, and Lystra Antoine, Director of Agricultural Development, Du Pont;
10. Met with Ms. Marie Litchenburg, Director of International Partnerships, Humana People to People and DAPP;
11. Separate meetings with Her Excellency Julia Gillard, Prime Minister of Australia; and Her Excellency Mary Robinson, former Prime Minister of Ireland;
12. Met with Mr. Ali Moshiri, President of Chevron Africa and Latin America Exploration and Production Company;
13. Meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of Phillip Morris Tobacco Company, Mr. Louis Camilleri;
14. Business Forum organized by Standard Bank (Malawi)
15. Met with the Alliance for a Green Revolution (AGRA) Vice President; and
16. Met with Mr. George Soros of the Open Society for Southern Africa (OSISA).

Her Excellency the President also had a meeting with Malawians resident in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Boston,

Massachusetts, and other States of the United States of America, where she briefed them of her economic recovery policies for the short-term and long-time development plans.

## **E. AWARDS RECEIVED**

Her Excellency the President also received awards in recognition to Her Excellency's significant and commendable work in fields of girls' education, women empowerment, women's reproductive health, food security and human rights over the years from the following organisations:

- The Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Congress;
- The Global Forum on African Women in Leadership for being the African Most Influential Female Leader of the Year;
- The Africa American Institute (AAI) during the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Gala Dinner held under the theme: "*Jobs for the African Future*" for her commitment to women's empowerment in Malawi;
- The Mary Robinson Award for her Leadership in women empowerment; and

- The Rockefeller Foundation hosted a luncheon in honour of Her Excellency the President's able leadership in increasing access to health coverage.

## **F. AGREEMENTS SIGNED**

Her Excellency the President signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with His Excellency Mr. Bill Clinton, former President of the United States of America, for cooperation between the Clinton Global Initiative and the Presidential Initiative on Hunger and Poverty Reduction.

The President also signed an Agreement with two US-based biotech firms TNI BioTech, Inc. and GB Oncology & Imaging Group LLC (GBOIG) to open an outpatient clinic at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, for the treatment of cancer and infectious diseases. Under this Agreement, an oncology unit will be established in Malawi within six months.

## **G. THE AFRICAN INVESTMENT CONFERENCE**

NEDBANK and ECOBank co-hosted an African Investment Conference that was held at NEDBANK Head Office, in Johannesburg. . The conference provided an opportunity for delegates to appreciate products provided by the NEDBANK and ECOBANK, in particular access to much needed capital for development projects. It uncovered most effective and efficient ways of enhancing Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), which is a very important vehicle for financing social and economic development in the Least Developing Countries, including Malawi.

Her Excellency the President was the Guest of Honour at the opening ceremony of the Conference. In her keynote address, she showcased investment opportunities available in Malawi in various sectors including energy, trade, infrastructure, agriculture, and finance. She urged and encouraged potential investors to come and invest in Malawi. She stressed the importance of the PPPs in reducing poverty and enhancing livelihoods for the people of Africa, in particular women and children. She went on to outline Malawi's vision for development as stipulated in the Malawi Growth and

Development Strategy and the Economic Recovery Plan. The President requested the international community for support in this vein.

## **H. CONCLUSION**

The 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly was very successful, at international level, considering the openness in the way the world leaders discussed the burning issues at hand, that would help to spur economic development and well-being of the majority of the member countries.

The Session offered an opportunity for Her Excellency the President to engage with a wide spectrum of institutions and individuals that will help Malawi address its current socio-economic challenges. Through the President's engagements with global leaders, commitments and agreements were reached for support to Her Excellency's vision of poverty eradication through economic growth and wealth creation.

The African Investment Conference in Johannesburg also proved to be very important, as it helped key development sectors in Malawi to sell bankable development projects to global potential investors.