



THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

STATEMENT

BY

**HON. MATHIAS MEINRAD CHIKawe, MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND
CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

**AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE 7TH SESSION OF THE HUMAN
RIGHTS COUNCIL, GENEVA
4 MARCH, 2008**

Check against delivery

Mr. President,

I am greatly honoured by this opportunity to address this 7th session of the Human Rights Council. My delegation appreciates the commendable work that is being done by you Mister President and your bureau. We wish to affirm our full support and cooperation to your bureau.

Mr. President

As we celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights this year, let us take stock of what has been done and what has not been done, so far. For, I believe the French Philosopher, Francois-Marie Voltaire was quite right when he said "Everyman is guilty of the good things he did not do". It is our obligation, therefore, that we put more efforts towards achieving full enjoyment of human rights, whatever it takes.

Mr. President,

Human rights have become an important pillar along with peace and security and economic development. Thus, we can not, as it has been proven, have one of these without the other. Tanzania remains committed towards the promotion and protection of human rights of her citizens. We have endeavoured to implement both our national, regional and international obligations with great vigour. We are party to the core UN Human rights instruments as well as the regional human rights instruments. This year alone, we have submitted for consideration our country report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and two other reports on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and country report on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. I am pleased to inform this august body that we are in the process of preparing our country report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) for eventual submission in due course.

Mr. President,

In advancing the human rights cause my Government has accepted to become seat for the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights with its headquarters in Arusha. This is a clear demonstration of the trust and confidence that our colleagues in Africa have bestowed on us. We will continue to work closely with the court so that it functions smoothly to achieve its intended goal.

Mr President,

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has welcomed the establishment of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism. In this regard, we have accepted to undergo a review as slotted during the selection process. In the same vein, we have volunteered to undergo the African Peer Review, the process of which has already started and it is going

on. We hope that the experience gained during the APRM will guide us during the UPR process.

Mr. President,

My Government continues to support the inherited Special Procedures from the former Human Rights Commission with great interest. For instance, the Special Rapporteur on the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes on the enjoyment of human rights visited our country from 21 to 30 January this year to carry out a fact-finding mission. We are happy with the outcome of his mission and are looking forward to commenting on the report to be considered in the course of this session.

Mr. President,

Before concluding, I would like to place on record that the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania recognizes that the issue of trafficking in humans is a complex one. However, it is the view of my government that this can be tackled through concerted efforts both at national, regional and international level. We are putting in place both policy and legal framework to address the problem. To this end, a specific law on combating and preventing trafficking of human beings especially women and children is in its final stage of legislation. And if all goes well, a Bill for this purpose will be tabled before the Parliament for first reading next month and it may become a law by November this year. We urge all members of this Council to work tirelessly together so that we can put an end to this undignified inhuman and degrading trade.

Mr. President,

It would be a remiss on my part if I had not mentioned that Tanzania like many other peace loving states is equally concerned about the ongoing violations of human rights in different parts of the world. We acknowledge the efforts undertaken at national, regional and international level to mitigate the suffering of the victims. We join others in appealing for increased efforts towards bringing to an end of such acts as well as campaigning for the end of impunity.

Finally, Mr. President, it is only factual that poverty remains the greatest threat to the promotion of equality and democratic values all over the world today. My Government continues to appeal to the developed partners to correct the prevalent economic imbalances through the already agreed frameworks such as the Monterrey Consensus. I wish to reiterate my Government's unequivocal position on the promotion and protection of human rights. I appeal to the Council to continue offering its support to my Government in the implementation of various plans and programmes pertaining to the promotion and protection of human rights.

I thank you, Mr. President.