

STATEMENT

BY

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**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA**

AT

**THE MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE
COORDINATING BUREAU OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT**

**27-30 APRIL 2009
CUBA, HAVANA**

**H.E. Mr. Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba,**

**H.E. Samani EL Wasila Samani, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of
Sudan and President of G 77 and China,**

Dear Ministers and Heads of delegation,

Dear Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to start out by expressing our gratitude to the people and Government of the Republic of Cuba for the hospitality extended to us and for the excellent arrangement made to make this Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, a success.

I would also like to express my profound appreciation to H.E. President Raul Castro Ruz, and Vice President of the Council of Ministers Esteban Lazo Hernandez for having graced this Ministerial Meeting by their presence at the opening session of our Ministerial Meeting this morning.

For more than two and a half years now, Cuba has provided effective leadership to our Movement. Cuba, no doubt, is a country with a great amount of credibility for its commitment to principles and to values that should underlie dignified relationships among nations. With Cuba at the helm, the prestige of NAM has been boosted once again and it has become a forum that cannot be ignored. Indeed, we are fortunate to have had Cuba leading our Movement at a very critical period in world history, both in terms of the fundamental changes taking place in international political relations as well as, as a result of the complex and serious global financial and economic crisis.

While we applaud Cuba for the competent leadership it has provided to the Movement during this complex and difficult period, we are, of course, hopeful that this standard set by Cuba would always be maintained by the Movement and by all those with the opportunity to guide this vital universal forum. In this regard, I have full confidence in

the incoming Chair, Egypt - a country bound by the umbilical cord of the great Nile River with my country - would further boost the prestige and weight of our Movement in the international arena.

Mr. Chairman,

It has now become incontrovertible that the Non-Aligned Movement is more, not less relevant, in a world which continues to change. There is now little doubt that the more the world changes, which is inevitable, the more relevant the Non-Aligned Movement becomes in all areas of interaction among nations at the global and regional levels. No other international forum, apart from the United Nations, is best placed to be the custodian of principles of international law that govern civilized behavior among nations. Given its structural limitations and the very origins of its Charter, no matter how much the UN might be beholden theoretically to the principles of sovereign equality among nations, it has always found it difficult to be consistent in its practical commitment to this ideal. The continuing call for the democratization of the UN, particularly the Security Council, and for the reform of its working method, is the reflection of these weaknesses of the United Nations - weaknesses whose victims are those in the developing world and members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The past decade has been a period when multilateralism was challenged and has been under enormous stress. It has now become obvious that there is no better substitute for a civilized and mutually beneficial handling of international relations - for rich countries or for poor ones; for big countries or for small ones - than the multilateral approach. This has been a firmly held position of our Movement since its very creation. The Movement has again been vindicated and, through this, it has once again, validated the value of its existence and its relevance at this juncture in world history.

The protection of the principles of international law goes hand-in-hand with the promotion of multilateralism. One cannot be maintained without the other. The recent attempt to disregard the sovereign rights of nations, to the extent of targeting leaders in

Africa such as what ICC has tried to do with respect to Sudan, is a reflection of this tendency to undermine both the principles of international law relating to the sovereign equality of nations and multilateralism.

The Non-Aligned Movement should be even more vigilant in this regard and complacency is never justified with respect to the challenge the developed world continues to face to ensure that no double standards are permitted in the way states are treated. With respect to the ICC, it is critical that it be impartial and non-partisan, if it wishes to serve humanity on the basis of the provisions of the Rome Convention. At the level of the African Union we indeed have agreed that African states parties to the ICC Treaty should ensure that this is in fact carried out.

Mr. Chairman,

No recent development has made it more obvious than the latest global economic crisis how much countries of the developing world can be the victim of initiatives or practices for which they have no responsibility and how much they continue to be the victim of the unfair system of globalization. Obviously, the current global economic crisis has also made it clear that in this globalizing world, one might succeed in limiting the damages caused to itself by developments such as the one we are experiencing today, but no nation can be totally immune. On the other hand, there is no question that, though we, members of the Movement, are not the cause of the problem, we are the ones who are affected the most.

There is no gainsaying the fact that, say, with respect to Africa, the impact of the economic crisis, unless the necessary measures are taken at the international level to help Africa meet the challenge, would be incalculable, not only causing the loss of the momentum in economic growth that has been registered by the continent over the last few years, but also contributing to the worsening of the social situation and jeopardizing whatever progress has been made in building peace and stability. This concern is indeed widely shared by many within the international community. But appreciation of the

problem is not enough. What is required is concrete action and it is within this context that we look forward to the speedy implementation of the promises made by the recently held G-20 Summit in London. However, the South-South Cooperation, which has been the lynchpin of our Movement, must be enhanced and further strengthened, if we are to make a difference. In this context, we also would like to support the initiative of the President of the 63rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly for convening the G-192 at the beginning of June 2009.

However, what is required in the long-term is concrete steps towards making the existing system of globalization fair and more equitable. This is of course unlikely to be carried out unless the current system of decision making at the international level, with respect to financial and economic matters, is changed to accommodate the voice of all, including those of the developing world. Obviously, this is not merely in the interest of the developing world and members of this Movement. While no country has the option of existing outside of the globalizing world, it is also nonetheless evident that a system of globalization that continues to be unfair can hardly be counted to be viable over the long-term.

The Non-Aligned Movement has indeed been calling for a fair international economic order since its inception. That call has now to be renewed in a more vigorous manner, not simply because this is what the imperative of justice calls for, but because this is the only prudent way of ensuring the viability of the globalizing world. The world we live in is a global village, not merely figuratively, but literally. As we all have the responsibility to protect the world from climate change so do we have the responsibility equally to ensure that the unfair system of globalization becomes fairer and more equitable.

That is also why the Non-Aligned Movement has in fact, not less, but more, responsibility to contribute, not only to a more equitable and humane world, but also to a world which will maintain its own viability. Obviously, what the latest economic crisis has made manifestly obvious is that while economic relations have produced intricate ties among countries and have left little possibilities for countries to stay apart, the situation

in the political domain is such that there is an absolute lack of global capacity to manage and regulate those activities that have become global, in line with the interest, security and viability of what has become a global village. This situation and the existing political vacuum make it imperative for our Movement to assume even greater responsibility, not only in terms of defending the interest of the developing world, but also the world in general and the interest of future generations. In other words, the Non-Aligned Movement is becoming, perhaps by default; perhaps partly because of what it is, a forum for mobilizing international public opinion for the creation of international consensus for policies that would help promote the safety and security of the world.

There is little doubt that in order for our Movement to be able to carry out these and related tasks, there is a vital need for further strengthening the unity of its members - a unity which can be maintained only when the principles of international law governing inter-state relations are observed by all in a meticulously scrupulous manner. That is when the moral authority of the Movement would be respected and its voices heard when it raises them on occasions of such violations, or when it speaks out to defend courses of action that are in the interest of the developing world or the world in general.

Mr. Chairman,

As one of the founding members of NAM, Ethiopia will continue to be devoted to the principles and objectives of the Movement. These are principles and objectives that have underpinned our activities in our own sub-region, in Africa and throughout the world. No matter how occasionally it might be difficult to find partners for peace, our conviction is that there should not be limit to how much one should be patient in the interest of peace, short of, of course, a clear case of aggression, which is always unfortunate all the more so in this day and age when so much can be achieved through solidarity and regional and international co-operation.

I have no doubt, this Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement will afford us the opportunity to further strengthen our Movement and to lay

the foundation for a successful 15th Summit of the Movement very soon in Sharm al-Shiekh, Egypt.

Let me conclude by reiterating how pleased we are to be here in Havana and how grateful we are to Cuba for this magnificent preparation and for having led the Movement since September 2006, with dedication and commitment.

I Thank You