

**Statement by Samuel Moela, MP, in the National Assembly during  
the Debate on Advancing the ideals of solidarity, equality and  
sustainable development to tackle critical global challenges**

We come together today under the theme of solidarity, equality and sustainable development to reflect on the state of global governance, especially in relation to peace and security. Ours is a world characterised by great progress, and many cutting-edge innovations, yet still a world that find itself deeply divided by inequality, conflict, and stunted growth in development. In this context, we reaffirm our commitment to the advancement of multilateralism and global solidarity, not as a matter of expediency, but as a necessity. We are striving to foster universal prosperity and wellbeing, which cannot flourish in the midst of conflicts.

Our pursuit of peace and security is not an isolated endeavour. It is a shared responsibility that transcends borders, political ideologies, and economies. Since the dawn of our democratic dispensation as South Africa, our foreign policy has been anchored on the principles of justice, human dignity, and a rules-based international order. We remain committed to working towards a just and inclusive global system, in which no one is left behind.

Honourable Members, sustainable development cannot be achieved without global solidarity. The challenges we face today are enormous. All around us we see poverty, inequality, environmental destruction, climate change, political instability, low levels of economic growth, and wars. These problems are not confined by geographical boundaries. They are global issues that arise from global systems, and affect us all to varying degrees. They therefore need *collective* action to be resolved.

South Africa recognises that at the heart of global instability are disparities in income, power, and resources. The economic divide between the developed Global North and the underdeveloped Global South is not a historical coincidence, but the product of systematic imbalances that are deeply entrenched and will take united effort to resolve. Financial institutions, trade systems, and global governance structures continue to favour a few at the expense of many.

This is why South Africa's Presidency of the G20 in 2025 is important. As we currently hold this critical role in this forum, it is paramount that we advance reforms that will usher in a more equitable global order – one that prioritises debt relief measures for developing countries, balanced trade agreements, and greater access to development finance. Global solidarity should not be mere rhetoric; it must be translated into real action that yields tangible results for the marginalised, who are our motive force.

To further emphasize, Honourable Members, solidarity is not an abstract ideal. It is a principle that defined our liberation movement, including our very own organisation. We recall with gratitude how nations across the world stood in solidarity with us during our darkest days. It is our moral obligation to extend the same solidarity to those who are in need, particularly within our continent.

Honourable Members nowhere is the need for global solidarity more urgent than in the area of peace and security in Africa.

The African Union's Agenda 2063: "**The Africa We Want**", envisages a continent where there is peace, prosperity, and integration. Conflicts continue to be one of the biggest setbacks to development on the continent, and elsewhere in the world. From the instability we have witnessed in the Sahel, to the ongoing crises in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan, Africa is shackled by conflict.

South Africa has always advocated African solutions to African problems. We have been at the coalface of peacekeeping and mediation efforts, playing fundamental roles in quite a number of countries. For instance:

- In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), as part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) peace initiative, South Africa has provided military and diplomatic support to stabilise the DRC and address armed insurgencies.

- In South Sudan, we played an essential role in brokering peace agreements to bring an end to years of civil war.
- In Eswatini and Lesotho, we mediated political tensions, ensuring that democracy and stability were upheld.
- In Mozambique, we have worked with SADC in responding to the insurgency in Cabo Delgado.

As one of the most developed countries on the continent, we have a moral obligation to assist. Our work towards continental peace is not limited to stabilising nations; it is about establishing conditions that will enable all African people to live lives of dignity, free from violence and displacement.

Part of this endeavour, Honourable Members, is to address the root causes of conflict. We can never end wars as long as rampant inequality, corruption at the highest levels, and a blatant disregard for democratic principles continue to plague African societies. Our goal, therefore, has to be creating the kinds of conditions that make conflict less likely.

Africa is home to the most youthful population in the world, yet our youth remains disproportionately affected by unemployment and economic exclusion. Without access to sustainable economic opportunities, young people become susceptible to recruitment by extremist groups, which fuels vicious cycles of violence that just never seem to end. Poverty and

inequality, fuelled by systemic imbalances, greed and corruption, breeds conflict.

This is why South Africa advocates economic development as a pillar of peacebuilding. Through initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), we seek to assist Africa to realise its true economic potential, create employment opportunities, and promote industrialisation at a large scale, especially the beneficiation of our minerals. An Africa that is flourishing economically, and where democratic principles prevail, is a stable Africa.

Honourable Members, in addition, illicit financial flows and the continued exploitation of Africa's critical mineral resources deny us the opportunity to benefit from the wealth beneath our soil. We should be investing our wealth in developmental programmes that benefit the people of Africa, not handing over our resources to serve foreign interests.

Beyond economic and political efforts, we also appreciate the power of arts, culture and sport to unite people.

Africa is incomparable in our music, languages, art and culture. In our history and traditions are a repository of a people who have overcome hardships time and again and have emerged resilient – ebullient even – and strong. We have incredible reserves of creativity. Programmes such as the African Union's Charter for African Cultural Renaissance are

harnessing these reserves to foster the kind of hopeful and triumphant spirit that that stirs people to seek peace.

We have seen, too, how sport brings nations together. Events such as the African Cup of Nations and the Olympics inspire limitless bounds in human ingenuity, with their impact extending beyond the final whistle. They remind us that we share a common humanity. We fully recognise the power of these events, and will continue supporting them as part of an overall agenda to promote peace and development on our continent.

Thus, Honourable Members, we have a foreign policy that we believe is balanced, reasonable and rooted in African realities. Our goal is clear, and our approach is multi-pronged, predicated on collaboration, commitment to democracy, and the sure knowledge that Africa's prosperity is our prosperity. We share our fortunes, in the sense that what happens to our neighbours happens to us, to varying degrees.

I thank you.