



Remarks by the UN Resident Coordinator in Tanzania, Mr. Zlatan Milisic | United Nations Day |

Dodoma | October 23th, 2021

Excellencies,

- Hon. Dr. Stergomena Tax, Minister of Defence and National Service,
- Representative from the Dodoma Regional Commissioner's Office,
- Representatives from different Government Ministries and Institutions,
- Excellencies, Ambassadors, High Commissioners,
- Representatives of UN Agencies, and International Organizations
- Chairpersons of the UN Association (UNA),
- Religious Leaders,
- Civil Society Representatives,
- UN Colleagues,
- Members of the Press
- Distinguished Guests,

Habari za Asubuhi! Asalam Aleikhum!

I am privileged to be addressing all of you here today on behalf of the UN in Tanzania as we celebrate the 76th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. 76 years ago, a small group of 51 states came out of the horrors of the Second World War and joined together to promote peace and development. Since then, that number has grown to 193 member states. 24th of October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948 – it marks the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter.

Today, as we do every year, we reiterate the long-standing collaboration between the Government and people of Tanzania, international development partners and the United Nations. By marking this day jointly, we are reinforcing our partnership and strengthening the commitment for successful implementation of Tanzania's national development vision and priorities, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development/Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and AU Agenda 2063.

The national theme for this year's UN Day is '*Building Back with Better Health Systems*' – in line with key global targets for achieving SDG 3: Good Health and Well Being. The COVID-19 pandemic has claimed the lives of millions of people and has overwhelmed health systems all over the world exposing just how fragile even the most developed health systems can be.

The pandemic has also halted, or reversed progress made in the health sector and shortened life expectancy. According to the 2021 SDGs report, 90% of countries are still reporting disruptions to essential health services due to COVID-19. All this and more evidence shows a clear need to build better and more sustainable health systems that are prepared for future shocks, such as public health emergencies. The adverse effects that the pandemic has had on health systems has disproportionately affected women, girls and persons living with disabilities.

We must continue, together, to support all efforts to create more resilient health systems that will ensure our communities and people are healthy, have access to basic health services and able to better withstand health crises such as COVID-19.

Since the pandemic arrived in Tanzania, the UN has been at the forefront of supporting various pillars of the COVID-19 national response with some UN organisations co-chairing pillars of the response. A key part of the UN's support to the response has been working with national and international partners to ensure essential health services such as maternal, child and adolescent health, HIV/AIDS and GBV services were sustained throughout the pandemic. This has helped reduce the strain that COVID-19 has put on Tanzania's health systems.

Our support to health systems did not, however, begin in the COVID-19 era. For many years, the UN has been contributing to strengthen health systems by helping build, re-construct and equip health facilities. We have been building and renovating clinics and dispensaries, some in very remote areas of the country, and providing them with facilities to ensure women can safely give birth and their newborn children have access to the care they need.

We also help equip health facilities with ambulances, ultrasound machines and delivery beds. Another way we support health systems is by providing medical supplies to health facilities all over the country. Various UN agencies specializing in the health sector provide a wide range of supplies such as vaccines, medicines and hygiene and sanitary items among other products.

Finally, we engage quite a lot in training and strengthening capacity of health workers and provide technical advice and support. Recently, UN agencies played an important role in helping develop the fifth National Health Strategic Plan and are currently supporting the government and other stakeholders to make available essential health and social welfare services to all households. Access to health care is not only a basic human right, but it is also essential for the prosperity of communities and the nation at large.

I would like to thank all of our international development partners, without whom these and many other activities would not be possible. I would also like to thank heads and representatives of UN agencies and all

UN staff that work hard to provide development support in Tanzania. **Ninasema Asanteni Sana!**

I take this opportunity to thank the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania for continuing to generously host refugees from neighboring countries. We deeply appreciate Tanzania's commitment to international humanitarian law, but also understand the challenges this presents. We will continue to support you in this noble endeavour!

We also recognize and thank the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for contributing UN Peacekeepers, who are risking their lives in support of Peacekeeping missions all over the world. This is especially important to highlight today, as the Hon. Minister of Defense has graced us with her presence and we are privileged to have with us members of the Tanzanian Defense Forces.

The recent Mid Term Review of the previous Health Sector Strategic Plan showed a significant reduction of deaths among children under five years, a 23% decline in the incidence of malaria and a commendable progress towards ending AIDS by 2030. This has been possible because of Government commitment, good planning at grassroots level and our strong partnerships. We need to build on this and other progress made over the years.

SDG 17, Partnerships for the Goals, calls for working together at the global and national level to achieve the SDGs and Agenda 2030. I wish to call on all stakeholders across the country to help accelerate and scale up effective partnerships to advance the SDGs. It is only by working together and having all hands-on deck, that we will be able to achieve the SDGs and create more sustainable health and other systems, as we build back better from the pandemic.

Allow me conclude by conveying a quote from the Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres's message for this year's UN Day.

AND I QUOTE:

“Seventy-six years ago, the United Nations was created as a vehicle of hope for a world emerging from the shadow of catastrophic conflict...COVID-19, conflicts, hunger, poverty and the climate emergency remind us that our world is far from perfect...We need to come together to tackle great challenges and advance the Sustainable Development Goals.

By securing and upholding the rights and dignity of all people — especially the poorest and most disadvantaged, girls and women, and children and young people...The values that have powered the UN Charter for the last 76 years — peace, development, human rights, and opportunity for all — have no expiry date.

As we mark UN Day, let's unite behind these ideals, and live up to the full promise, potential and hope of the United Nations.”

END OF QUOTE

Asanteni Sana! Happy UN Day to you all!