

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE HON'BLE SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY OF SEYCHELLES, HON. DR. PATRICK HERMINIE**

4TH WORLD CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF PARLIAMENT

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK
1ST SEPTEMBER, 2015**

Honourable Speakers of Parliament

Fellow Parliamentarians from across the world

Distinguished delegates

Ladies and gentlemen

All protocol observed

I feel privileged to be here today to address you on behalf of my country, the Republic of Seychelles; a small island developing state right in the middle of the Indian Ocean, to the East of Africa.

Our island state is striving hard to keep abreast with the global development agenda. Despite many inherent challenges, it is determined to uphold the fundamentals of democracy for the prosperous and sustainable development of all its people.

Seychelles is today considered a high upper middle income country and one of the few African countries that have achieved almost all the MDGs and is well poised to tackle the challenges of the SDGs.

Our achievement can be attributed to strong political will which is manifested in a stable democracy with people-centred development at the core of our socio-economic policies, which include free health care to all, access to clean water and proper sanitation, the empowerment of women and universal access to education up to tertiary level. We firmly believe in the rule of law, the separation of powers between the three branches of government and the independence of state institutions. Ours is a democracy that caters for the clash of divergent views, thus assuring political and economic stability, both important prerequisites for progress and development.

Thus we can confidently declare today that the SDGs and the unfinished business of the MDGs are attainable if there is political commitment to use the SDGs to frame our national agendas, policies and programmes over the next fifteen years.

We certainly cannot be satisfied with the status quo with 1 billion people worldwide living in squalid poverty and millions still are dying before reaching the age of five. We need to take the bull by the horn and play our part to ensure that most, if not all, SDGs have been attained by 2030.

I totally agree with those who had called for the rich industrialised countries to ensure adequate financing, and for the world community to strive even more to promote peace and minimize conflict. We must boost trade and investment in all regions of the world, especially inter-regional trading opportunities; we must ensure technology transfer and minimize brain drain. We must recognize and appreciate the interconnectedness of the world, which is now a global village. We must intensify our war on the vicious cycle of poverty, corruption and terrorism, for indeed they are all interlinked. We have recently seen for ourselves how attempts to promote democracy have descended into disarray.

Mr. Chairperson, ladies and Gentlemen, the island state of Seychelles, support in particular SDGs 13 and 14, for they recognize the need to combat climate change, the tapping of marine resources and the importance of the seas for trade between nations as imperative for the sustainable development of island states.

Time is of the essence and I have to end my brief intervention. But let me first appeal to you all to be optimistic and let us all renew our support to the new set of SDGs to be adopted later this month. Let us today remember the words of President Eleanor Roosevelt, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams".

Thank you