

## PARLIAMENT OF MALAWI

### SPEECH BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SPEAKER DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE AT THE 144<sup>th</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE I.P.U. IN BALI, INDONESIA.

- Your Honour the President of the 144<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Inter Parliamentary Union, who is also the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr. Puan Maharani.
- Fellow Honourable Speakers, Presidents and Leaders of delegations from all Member Parliaments here assembled.
- Honourable Members of Parliament in various delegations
- International observers and all distinguished representatives of NGOs attending this General Assembly
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I am greatly honoured to stand before this honourable Assembly which is meeting in this beautiful City in Indonesia to contribute, from a Malawi perspective, to the topic *“Getting to zero: Mobilizing Parliaments to act on climate change”*

**Madam President,**

It is now abundantly clear for everyone to see and appreciate the fact that almost all countries on earth are facing and are having to deal with significant consequences of climate change. The

challenges of Climate change are felt even more in the world's poorest countries partly because of their low adaptive capacities. Countries in Sub Saharan, Africa where Malawi belongs, are cases in point.

**Madam President**

As a Member of Parliament, I stand here with total conviction that, we parliamentarians hold the key when it comes to climate change issues because we are well positioned, through our legislative, representative as well as oversight mandate, to influence greatly the fight against climate Change.

**Madam President**, due to climate change Malawi has experienced and right now, it is reeling under the devastating effects of the various cyclones such as idai, cyclone Ana last month and a few days ago, cyclone Gombe, have added a lot of suffering to the poor and vulnerable in Malawi.

**Madam President**, a lot of lives have been lost, infrastructure completely destroyed, sources of income for the poor have been grossly affected. In short the social and economic fabric which we used to enjoy as a developing country has been grossly affected as a result of climate change.

**Madam President** as we speak, there are fears once again that yet another cyclone is developing which may affect Malawi and pour more miseries in addition to the current challenges.

**Madam President**, Malawi is currently at the mercy of ongoing dangerous tropical cyclones which I have mentioned. As a country, Malawi has never experienced these terrible events before, and unfortunately there is no end in sight to these natural disasters in the near future. Malawi will and continues to suffer the consequences of some of the world's worst natural disasters occasioned by climate change.

**Madam President**, as I said, the sad part of it is that, these disasters are still continuing rendering much of our population destitute. As we debate this very important topic, I wish to put it on record that much of our infrastructure has been destroyed in most parts of the country.

This, **Madam President**, has brought more miseries to our vulnerable citizens. According to the 2009 Oxfam report on Climate Change in Malawi, the increase in temperature and, as is the case now, an increase in abnormal rainfall has been ongoing for the past 40 years and has caused drought and serious food shortages in Malawi. Needless to say, Madam President Malawi can attest to the serious challenges brought about by climate change and as a country we have appealed for assistance in that regard.

**Madam President**, I am sure you will appreciate the magnitude of the challenges which Malawi is suffering coming as it were hard on the heels of a devastating covid -19 pandemic which has also had and continues to have a major impact on our economy.

**Madam President**, the climate challenges have had a knock on effect on our country when we take into account the fact that Malawi is a poor country ranked 163 on the development index. What this means, Madam President is that, much as our Government is trying all it can to deal with, and assist the suffering people particularly women and children, Malawi does not have the enormous resources to cope up with these challenges.

**Madam President**

As Parliament of Malawi, we have tried our best and continue to do so to provide leadership and allocate resources, within our

constitutional mandate towards mitigating the suffering that has been caused by natural disasters.

Through our role in considering and approving the national Budget, Parliament of Malawi has been in the forefront in ensuring that Government allocates enough resources in various Ministries and Government Departments that deal with Natural disasters to continue to lead in coming up with workable policies and actions to mitigate climate challenge issues and the suffering of our citizens.

### **Madam President**

One of the functions of legislatures is legislation. I believe, **Madam President**, that to effectively deal with climate change, each country needs effective legislation which takes a cue from the global approach to global policies, treaties or protocols on climate change. Various international Bodies and institutions provide a lot of valuable information and research on climate change which, as Parliamentarians we need to harness and come up with legislation where need be.

Even at national level, **Madam President**, it is imperative that as legislators we ensure that existing laws are in tandem with the new dispensation that is being influenced heavily by climate change. I am glad to report here that Parliament of Malawi is currently considering various pieces of legislation aimed at improving land use, forest, and water conservation with the hope that cumulatively Malawi will significantly contribute to the global action on climate change.

### **Madam President**

On the international level, **Madam President**, I believe that as representative of the people we can inform the development of national negotiating positions in protocols and other

international agreements on climate change. In addition, Madam President, as parliamentarians we should be able to aim at building political and public support for effective and meaningful implementation of the international agreements and protocols that we accede to.

**Madam President.**

One very crucial role for parliamentarians is on oversight. For policies, budgets and implementation of numerous programs on climate change to bear fruit, parliaments are supposed to and should oversee what and how governments are implementing various action plans within approved legislative and budgetary framework.

It is high time, **Madam President**, for us Parliamentarians to consider allocating substantial amounts of money in each budget specifically for climate change. Such a deliberate strategy would ensure that resources are available for research and policy review as well as implementation on climate change.

*(Conclusion)*

**Madam President**

As I come to the conclusion of my submission, allow me, Madam President, to join fellow Speakers of Parliament who have taken the floor before me, to thank the Executive Committee for coming up with this topic which is not only timely, but quite relevant at this time of the year when countries like Malawi, Mozambique, Madagascar etc. are reeling under and grappling with the serious devastations that have been caused by climate change. Malawi therefore calls upon all delegates to the 144<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to embrace this opportunity and come up with resolutions that would assist our parliaments to mobilize resources, commitment, and zeal in dealing with climate change.

**Madam President and distinguished delegates, I thank you for your attention.**