

STATEMENT BY H.E DR. JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE, FORMER  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AT THE  
ALMA STEERING COMMITTEE HOLIDAY COCKTAIL RECEPTION,  
18TH DECEMBER, 2015, NEW YORK

*Your Excellency the Ambassador of Ethiopia, Chair of the ALMA Steering  
Committee;*

*Mr. Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations;*

*Ms. Joy Phumaphi, the Executive Secretary of ALMA;*

*Excellencies Permanent Representatives to United Nations;*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

We are meeting today at a very opportune time and a defining moment in our journey to make malaria an agony of the past. Just **84** days ago, the world adopted here in New York the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), of which eradicating malaria is one of the top agenda. For us in the ALMA family, it is therefore a moment filled with renewed hope, drive and vigor to work together with others to eliminate malaria by 2030.

It is therefore my pleasure to join you this evening to celebrate together our successes and reflect on our way forward. I thank you H.E. Ambassador Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the UN for inviting me to this

cocktail reception. I am glad to meet again with friends whom we have worked together to wage a campaign against malaria.

### **Celebrating ALMA's Success**

*Your Excellencies and Invited Guests;*

It was here in New York with nine African leaders and some of you, way back in 2009, that I launched ALMA as a forum for high-level advocacy and action to fight malaria in Africa. I am proud that ALMA has grown from strength to strength and delivered more than we had first anticipated. Looking back six years ago, I feel proud that we did the right thing for humanity. I am pleased that successive Chairs of ALMA have taken this alliance to greater heights to date. I equally commend our 'illustrious lady' Madame Joy Phumaphi, the Executive Secretary of ALMA and her entire staff for the exemplary and noble work.

### **Kicking Malaria Out of Africa**

*Your Excellencies and Invited Guests;*

Today, nowhere more than in Africa is the disturbing relationship between malaria and poverty so conspicuous. Much as malaria is categorized as a tropical disease, the truth remains

that malaria incidence and related deaths are not fairly shared by all continents within the tropics. There is less incidence in Latin America and Asia compared to Africa.

According to the 2015 World Malaria Report, out of **438,000** malaria deaths that occurred worldwide, **91 percent** occurred in Sub Saharan Africa. In addition, **89 percent** of all malaria cases globally were recorded in Sub Saharan Africa. In Africa, malaria affects more women and children than men, of which, under 5 malaria related mortality accounts for **two-third** of all malaria deaths. And this is not an accident since women and children make up a big share of the African poor.

One thing is certain, that is, it is within human reach to eradicate malaria. It is *thinkable, possible and doable* because many countries on this planet have been able to do it. Why not us? The story of success in fighting malaria in Africa convinces us that with more funding, timely and sustained interventions, buttressed by political will, it is possible to eliminate malaria within our lifetime. And of course, in the context of the SDGs, by 2030. Taking an example of a last decade, between 2000 and 2015 alone, there has been **60 percent** global reduction in malaria

death, which translated into **6.2 million** lives saved. In Tanzania, the rate of infection has been reduced by **50 percent** and deaths by **75 percent** between 2005 and 2015, while in Zanzibar the prevalence rate is now **0.2 percent**.

### Way Forward

#### *Your Excellencies and Invited Guests;*

Despite this rosy continental outlook, results and impact varies within and between African countries. Many African countries continue to experience sub-optimal progress towards national and international malaria targets. There is a need to muster political will to secure the gains achieved, some of which are threatened by the sweeping health priorities after the emergence of the Ebola crisis. We should build on the success of MDGs and do better in the implementation of the SDGs. We should increase vigilance in monitoring, accountability and action to ensure results. Luckily, ALMA has developed a scorecard which guides informed actions. It is now about time to translate the *scorecard to scored goals!*

### Conclusion

*Your Excellencies and Invited Guests;*

It is therefore imperative that as Ambassadors you continue to maintain malaria high on the political agenda here at the United Nations, the Africa Union and in your respective countries. Together we can make Malaria history. This is not merely a dream but a possible reality. The world has won over many diseases in the past, and can conquer malaria in the immediate future. To me, this is a conviction and a course worth living for and fighting for.

In this phase of my life as a Retired President, I pledge my commitment and support to these efforts. I shall continue to work closely with you all to achieve a malaria free Africa by 2030.

With these many words, I wish Your Excellencies, and dear friends and comrades Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year in 2016.

*Thank you all for listening.*