

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS**  
**H.E. Ambassador Macharia Kamau**

Hon. Members of Parliament,  
Excellences,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking the organizers for inviting me here today. It is indeed a pleasure to be here and to be given the opportunity to have this conversation with you.

This seminar on peace, security and sustainable development has come at a most opportune time for three main reasons:

1) Firstly, the United Nations is currently observing its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Last week the UN General assembly in New York adopted the new 2030 Agenda for sustainable development which has the sustainable development goals at its core. These Sustainable Development Goals, that I shall speak to shortly, represent a radical break from the past in a number of important ways and constitute a fundamental paradigm shift in the way in which international cooperation will roll out into the future.

But beyond international cooperation the sustainable development goals and the 2030 agenda has deep implications for the way in which domestic governance and development is to be pursued in the future. This is important.

Because the MDGs, were good the 2030 Agenda takes as its point of departure the experience that the world had with the millennium development goals. But there are some important and fundamental differences that I think we need to take note of as we move forward.

Among them is that the character of development both international and domestic has changed throughout the world in all countries. We live in a very different world from that in which we all lived in 15 to 20 years ago. And this change has taken three important forms.

First, we now recognize that the global and domestic challenge that we all face with development [in all countries] has evolved and become more complex. MDG's focused on the provision of basic services to help fight poverty, the provision of food, health, education, water and sanitation is simply not enough.

The SDGs demand a much larger menu of responses that reflect the totality of the challenges we face in the real world that we live in.

Moreover, MDGs only focused on the role of governments, mainly the executive arm, and its ability to deliver these basic services is also deficient. The SDGs requires a broader matrix of players that reflect more closely how development is orchestrated how peace is maintained in countries, not just by a powerful Executive but also with a strong and democratic legislature, an involved civil society, a free media and a just and peaceful society.

2) The second reason why this meeting is important and has come at a crucial time is because the meeting comes at a time of great social upheaval in the world. This upheaval has resulted in the uprooting and migration of hundreds of thousands of people with all the consequences to disrupted countries and receiving countries alike. This is symptomatic of a much deeper problem in our world that we must face up to and that can only be responded to with sustainable development.

3) The third reason this is indeed a timely meeting is that it avail us the opportunity to remind ourselves that the SDGs focus on the interplay between people, planet, and the pursuit of prosperity and building of peace in a free and participatory world. This idea is not new. But the global agreement to implement it together as One World is. This is new and fundamentally important.

We now understand and agree that when we build our economies and increase our prosperity in any one country, we must look to help our neighbour to do the same and crucially, we must do so respecting the earth's ecosystems, understand our planetary boundaries and build created cohesion within and between countries by fighting inequality within and among countries.

This is why SDG are universal, as is the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; simply said, all countries must grow and prosper together or they will fail and fail the planet on which we live, together. No society, country of region is an independent island. We all belong in one world, with one interconnected ecological and climatic system.

This new global world order which we have all agreed to together means that legislators, such as yourself, will need to reassess what it means to be a democracy, a society and even an economy in this new 2030 paradigm.

4) There is a fourth reason of course why I believe that it is important that we have met today. This is related directly to the subject of this seminar, peace, security and sustainable development in the context of tackling the root causes and consequences of violent extremism and terrorism.

The world has seen a sharp rise in violent extremism and terrorism over the past 20 years. This rise has caused huge disruptions in society and economies is all over the world. But to understand the challenge that we face we must stand back from the media hype and focus on the root causes and the direct challenges that we face in tackling this issue.

It is important that we discuss the issue of extremism, violence and terrorism and understand its magnitude, extent and intensity. Headlines must not drive our thinking, legislation or action.

A key lesson that has come to the fore is that violent extremism and terrorism cannot be seen and dealt with in isolation to everything else that goes on in society. This is consistent with the thinking that has guided our work on the 2030 Agenda and the SDG's.

And for this meeting that is where I would like to start. What we have learned and the thinking that helped us develop the SDGs and in particularly SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies is something we must pay close attention to.

# Goal 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies



- Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
- End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
- By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime
- Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms
- Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
- Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance
- By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration
- Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements
- Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime
- Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

Source: [www.globalgoals.org](http://www.globalgoals.org)

First: that fragile and conflict ridden societies have underperformed on the MDGs and in fact have underperformed on all major development indicators across the board. Economic, social, environmental, the lot.

That peaceful and inclusive societies are more likely than not to outperform countries that are caught up in civil War or strife and that high inequality within counties undermines social cohesion and rapid development. This may sound obvious and indeed it is, but it is still an important lesson that we need to use to guide our actions and legislative action moving forward.

Second: We have also learned that undemocratic and poorly governed societies are also more likely to slide in conflict, civil war or civil strife. Democracy and strong civic and governance institutions are potent and important for peace and sustainable development. This too is an important lesson that we need to take with us moving forward. We should note that they are universal also lessons for all countries.

Another crucial and important lesson that is of particular relevance to Africa is that poverty is not a direct contributor extremism, violence or terrorism. Poor

people are not more likely to resort to acts of terror than other social groups. This is important to note especially for societies with large tracks of poverty that might think themselves doomed to violence or terrorism just because of poverty. Rather it is inequality in the context of poverty and unfair and unresponsive institutions that is the real trigger and contributor to extremism, violence and terror.

Closely related to the mix of inequality and poverty is the injection of the narrative of marginalization and victimization. Usually built on a religious or ideological construct. This mix is incendiary, highly toxic and destructively dangerous. Legislators must focus on this within their constituencies but also between constituencies and equally where they draft laws and legislate.

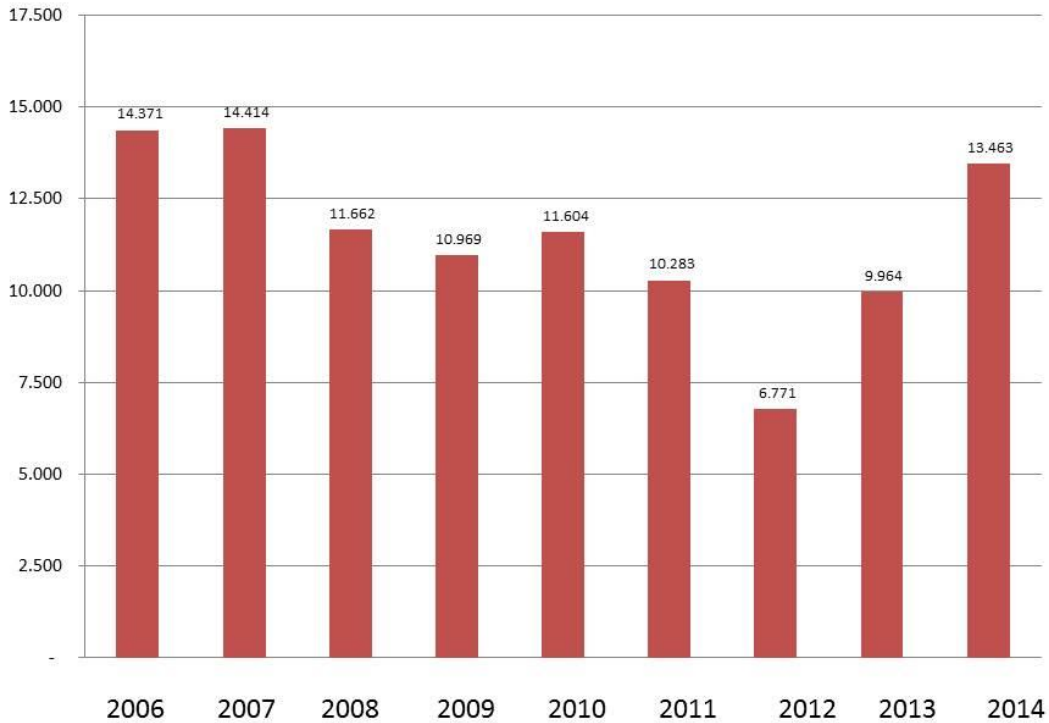
A much forgotten but important dimension that we have also learned is that trade among nations and within communities inside countries is also very important not only to help countries grow as trade is the primary promoter of economic growth and therefore create greater prosperity but also to help build cohesion and solidarity between countries all of which reduce opportunities for extremism, violence and terrorism.

So what is the role of legislators and what are legislators to do. First of all it is that legislators must understand the character and nature of violent extremism, terrorism in the world in which we live today. You cannot legislate what you don't know or what you don't understand.

Let's take a look at three graphs that might help contextualize the situation that prevails today.

The terrorist attacks worldwide which claim about 14, 000 lives annually.

### N. of terrorist attacks worldwide (2006-2014)

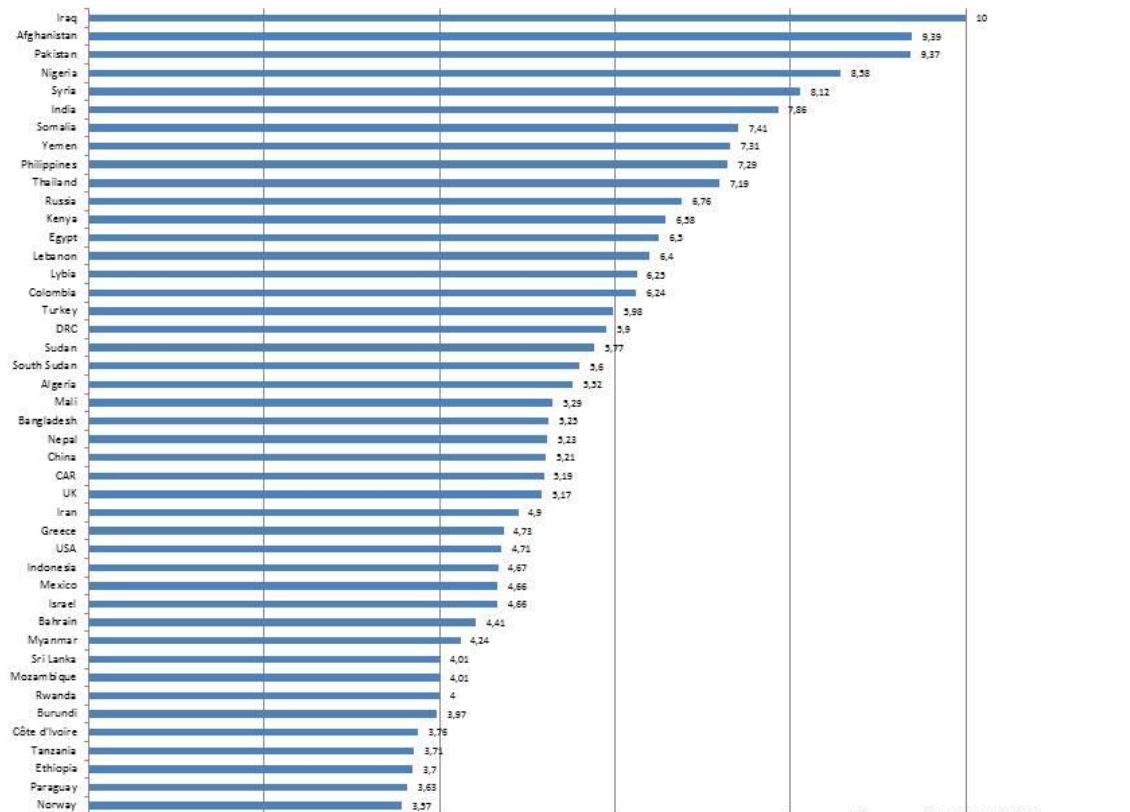


Source: Statista 2015

Terrorism is not a major contributor to death and harm in the world. Road accidents, preventable death from disease, and homicide from gun violence and even suicides kill hundreds of thousands and even millions of people every year. What terrorism does is instil fear and despondence and ruin economies in countries in which it takes place-disproportionate to the number of deaths it causes.

The second slide is the global terrorism index of the top 50 countries affected in the world. Noting that only 60 countries in the world out of 193 countries face ongoing terrorism.

## Global terrorism index 2014, top 50 countries



Source: Statista 2015

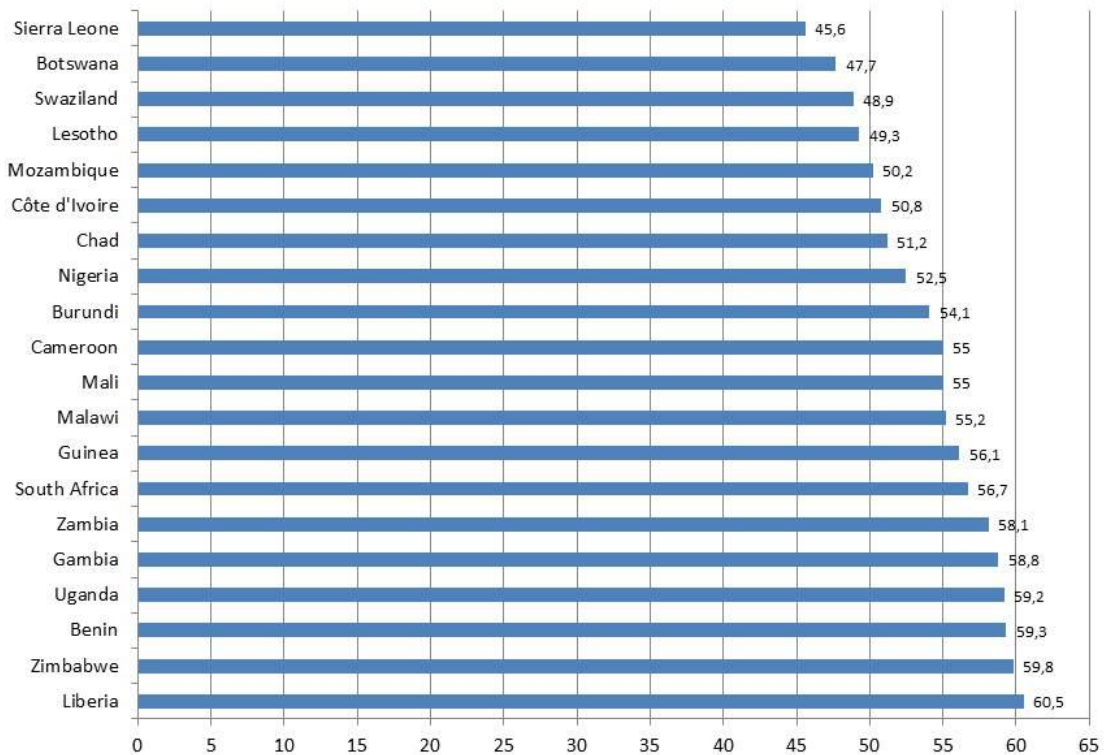
Speak to graph. Including to note that Africa is not among the top 10 on the list, except Somalia and Nigeria and the trend is to get worse not better. So no room for complacency.

- Warning—so what preventative action?

The third graph may appear incongruous to this conversation but in fact it's not. This graph shows the top 20 countries with low life expectancy. Life expectancy is a superb multidimensional indicator of economic, social, health, education, water, food availability, sanitation, premature death from multiple causes, violence etc. Notice how Africa is over represented. Speak to graph.

- Where do countries need to invest?
- The role of legislators is to prioritize government expenditure and allocated budget resources.
- So legislators have important and determining role.

## Life Expectancy in Years



Source: Statista 2015

These three graphs together tell a story and send a powerful message to all of us. And it is the message of the 2030 Agenda.

The key message being that there is no one solution for the world's problems and that fixing one thing, say terrorism or health, sanitation or education will not by itself guarantee a better more prosperous and peaceful society.

The message of the SDG is that all the goals are important and that legislators and the Executive alike must not and cannot pick and choose.

Sustainable development demands a universal and comprehensive approach to development.





So let me conclude.

By saying the following the SDG's and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development is not only important but it holds great promise for a better more peaceful, more prosperous future for all of us together. A world with less social disruption and upheaval, extreme violence, terrorism and other social ills. It also promises us a better healthier planet on which to live, if we pursue all the goals and targets.

Legislators are the representative of the People's the very people who will perpetrate acts of extreme violence and terrorism, the very people who are caught up in war and acts that undermine peaceful societies and stable institutions. Legislators needs to act as leaders and is guides for people, leaders who understand that we need a global legislatures that think for their communities but also beyond them. Leaders who legislate as if peace matters, as if the planet matters. Leaders who want to secure the peace, to secure the planet and to secure us all within that planet.

I thank you. MK