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STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN COMMEMORATIVE  
MEETING TO PAY TRIBUTE TO MEMORY OF PRESIDENT TITO

Following is the text of a statement by the President of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, Salim Ahmed Salim (United Republic of Tanzania), to this morning's commemorative meeting to pay tribute to the memory of President Tito of Yugoslavia who died on Sunday, 4 May:

Today we, representatives of 152 nations, are gathered here in this General Assembly Hall to pay solemn tribute to the memory of a fallen hero, a great man, a freedom fighter, an outstanding leader of peoples, a world statesman and a legend. For President Josip Broz Tito, whose death we here, like hundreds of millions throughout the world, are today mourning, was all those things and more.

The death of President Tito comes at a particularly difficult time in history when the world is confronted with problems and crises of great magnitude. Indeed, it has come at the very time which demands the kind of wise and farsighted leadership that President Tito provided. The loss brought about by his death is, therefore, all the more irreparable. It is consequently all the more necessary that, as we hold this special commemorative meeting to pay homage to his memory, we should use the occasion to reflect on the exemplary leadership that President Tito provided in the quest for our common humanity and commit ourselves to continue to fight for the objectives for which he so ardently and passionately fought. For there could be no better tribute to this giant of our times.

At this juncture, it is fitting to recall the wise observations made by President Tito more than 16 years ago. Addressing the eighteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly on 22 October 1963, he declared: "In recent years there have been serious crises in international relations, such as had never, one might say, confronted humanity in the past, as far as the consequences which they might have entailed. Although these crises were not always solved in the most satisfactory manner, because they left their mark on international relations, we nevertheless succeeded, due particularly to the United Nations and also to the realistic approach of some of the responsible leaders of the great Powers, in avoiding the greatest danger -- the danger of the world being engulfed in a general nuclear catastrophe."

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Although this statement was made in a different international environment, his observations in respect to the role and responsibility of the United Nations in confronting problems and crises is no less pertinent today. Equally relevant is the need for demonstrations of responsibility and restraint on the part of the great Powers.

President Tito, the brave warrior, dedicated his entire life to the welfare of the people. When Yugoslavia was invaded by the fascist forces in 1941, through his exceptional military talent and ingenuity, through his patriotism and exemplary commitment, he rallied and led the partisan resistance in the struggle for national liberation from the forces of oppression. In Yugoslavia, he will continue to be remembered as an organizer, a fighter of immense courage and determination and for his organizational capabilities which laid foundations for the new democratic community of equal nations on which the unity of the country was able to flourish.

Subsequent to the heroic victory of the valiant partisan forces over the fascist forces, President Tito was able, through the reorganization of the economy and vast agrarian reforms, to help mould the new Yugoslavia into a modern State.

As the internationalist, President Tito championed the cause of peaceful and active coexistence on the international scene and played the key role in the conception, establishment and development of the non-aligned movement. As my President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere in his message of condolence to President Lazar Kolisevski stated, and I quote: "As a founder-member and leader of the non-aligned movement he is irreplaceable ... For the non-aligned movement has necessarily and correctly developed since it was first founded on the initiative of President Tito, President Nasser and Prime Minister Nehru. But always President Tito has been in the forefront of its growth and its adaptation to changing international circumstances, while insisting that the movement retains and strengthens its non-aligned character ...".

In consolidating the principles of the policy of non-alignment as an active policy of positive involvement in world issues, President Tito continued to advocate the right of each nation to an independent existence and struggled for the rights of all people of the world to freedom and justice. It was in the fight against the forces of injustice and domination in the world and in his farsighted and consistent stand in defence of the principles of sovereignty of nations that he earned for himself and his great country immense respect and admiration among all members of the international community.

President Tito's vision in analysis, his ideas and profound comprehension and grasp of the dynamics and intricacies of international relations became vital not only in steering his country through three and one-half decades of uninterrupted peace and sound stability, but also in asserting the position of the non-aligned nations as States committed to providing alternatives to confrontation and cold war.

It was for his genuine commitment that, even when beset with failing physical health, President Tito continued unwaveringly to steer the movement

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into a genuine independent and universal force in the struggle for peace and justice and laboured for the establishment of a new order of international, political and economic relations based on co-operation between nations founded on freedom, equality and social justice. It was thus the concern for the principles of co-operation based on independence, equality and complementarity of interests that has continued to guide Yugoslavia in pursuing the ideals of freedom through its immeasurable contribution to the liberation struggle in the world, and Africa in particular. President Tito was a dependable and trusted supporter of the liberation struggle.

As a statesman, President Tito was a towering figure, a patient negotiator and resolute advocate for detente and relaxation of international tension. His skill and ability to assert the independence of Yugoslavia earned him great esteem and admiration, even among his most ardent critics. His clear-sightedness in determining the course of his country's political and diplomatic activity served to strengthen and consolidate the determination of Yugoslavia to contribute to the work of the United Nations and promote the ideals for which the Organization stands.

In sum, President Tito was a brave and courageous man, an ardent champion of peace who devoted his life, in an exceptionally active manner, to fighting for the cause of independence and social progress of his great country -- Yugoslavia. Thus, as founder of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, he will immortally be remembered for his dedication and commitment to peace and stability which brought about prosperity to his people.

As founder of the non-aligned movement, President Tito symbolized the determination of the third world countries to assert themselves and to be positively involved in world affairs by, inter alia, striving for democratization of international relations.

As the political and military activist, he will be remembered for the manner in which he distinguished himself as an organizer, political thinker and theoretician whose theories found concrete expression in their application, both within Yugoslavia and other continents of the world.

As a statesman, he not only was one of the most pre-eminent political giants of this century, but also as a leader, philosopher and thinker, he provided great inspiration and example to the forces of peace and justice in the world. His contribution to the work of this Organization will remain a monumental testimony to his untiring efforts of consolidating the foundations of independence and genuine interdependence.

Though his example of excellence and total and indomitable commitment to world peace and justice cannot be duplicated, it can be emulated. Thus, as the international community joins the bereaved family, Government and people of Yugoslavia in this somber moment of mourning his death, I am confident that there can be no better eulogy or tribute to him than to reaffirm our determination to uphold the ideals for which he dedicated his entire life and

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