

**SPEECH BY CDE. DONALD T. CHARUMBIRA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF
THE WORLD ASSEMBLY OF YOUTH, AT THE ZANU (PF) EXTERNAL
RELATIONS CONFERENCE : THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES
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Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades & Friends:

Revolutionary greetings from not only myself, but the many other young people in the Diaspora who would like to be here and charting the way forward for the continued struggle for liberation.

The greatest resource of any nation is its young people. It is the youth who constitute the most potent force for economic, political and social transformation in any given nation, and therefore youth who are the torchbearers of not just the future, but also the present situations of their countries.

More than 70% of the world population is below the age of 30. So when we speak of the role of youth in the continued liberation struggle, we are speaking about the vast majority of the African population in the Diaspora. It is the youth in the Diaspora who are key to the future struggles of Africa and its people.

And who, you may ask, are the youth? Are they the United Nations definition of 16 to 24? Or are they the Eastern definition of 16 to 40? We in the World Assembly of Youth say that as long as you feel that you are young, dynamic and yet unsettled in life, then you are a youth. Age alone is not the sole defining factor of youth.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Our greatest desire as young people is not for money. Our greatest desire is not for big houses. Our greatest desire is not for cars or cellphones or credit cards. Neither is our greatest desire for drugs or alcohol or sex or delinquency.

The greatest desire of young people worldwide is for Ideology to give meaning and purpose to our lives.

We live in a world that is void of ideology. Better were the days of the cold war, when ideologies were thriving and actively engaging young people. The communists on one end had their youth organs which propagated communism, and some socialism. On the other spectrum there were capitalists and liberalists. There was a sense of equilibrium in the world youth movement because the bipolar world provided ideological pluralism.

Even in Africa, young people had a greater sense of meaning and purpose during the struggles for political liberation, as many dedicated their lives to achieve this.

Today, the unipolar world order has robbed meaning and purpose from our lives. We now live for worthless capitalist ideals which revolve around making money and spending on material luxuries. Consumerism is the driving force behind young people today. This lack of meaningful ideology is behind the decay in values of youth.

We are here today to discuss the youth role in the continued liberation struggle. I believe that life itself is a struggle! What do we live for? Why are we here? What is the meaning of all this? If we ask ourselves sincerely, we will surely see that we are born to struggle, and we live to struggle.

The question is: what do we struggle for? Shall we be like the animals which struggle for daily rations of food under the laws of the jungle? Or shall we be like the superior beings God made us to be, and raise the level of our struggle to the higher levels of total liberation and self-actualisation?

Whatever our goals in life, nothing can be achieved without a struggle. Even to live daily, to eat, to drink, to have shelter – these are the fruits of the struggles we face each day. The struggle must have a purpose. It can be a base purpose such as physiological need, or a loftier purpose such as long-term social and economic emancipation.

If we do not have a clear understanding of our struggle, then we shall have no meaning and purpose to our lives, and we shall be mere pawns of in western.

So our greatest challenge as young people is to achieve a higher level of ideology than merely consumerism. We need to subscribe to greater struggles which will empower not only ourselves as Africans, but many other generations to come.

To define our struggle as young people, we must firstly say thank you to our elders. Gallant liberation war heroes who fought the racist enemies to bring us political independence. Thank you comrades for dedicating your lives, your possessions, your children and your families towards the liberation of the African continent. Your struggle was a meaningful struggle. A struggle for Black Majority Rule.

Today we have achieved Black Majority Rule. Now for us as the younger generation, we ask ourselves what our role is, now that political independence has been achieved. To this I would like to point out that whilst political independence has been achieved, our struggle will be for economic and social independence, total emancipation from all forms of colonial control – this is our role as the younger generation.

We need to work concertedly to ensure that we regain total control of our resources, we work hard to add value and produce those resources, and we free ourselves from mental and cultural subjugation.

For young people in the Diaspora, nationalism and pan-Africanism are ideologies which we need to take to heart for Africa to prosper.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We need to urgently revitalise the spirit of nationalism and pan-Africanism both at home and in the Diaspora. Young people must be proud to be Africans. We must be proud to come from such a continent of beauty, and proud to represent our various nationalities.

From the snow-capped Mount Kilimanjaro to the Dallol Depressions, from the mighty Victoria Falls to the pyramids of Egypt, from the Kalahari to the rugged mountain ranges and plateaus of Ethiopia, from the spectacular shores and beaches of Southern Africa to the warm and humid equatorial rainforests; Africa is richly endowed by nature. The unparalleled length of the Nile, the vastness of the Sahara, the unequalled beauty of the wildlife of the Serengeti plains, the captivating charm of West Africa's Atlantic coastlines are but a few of the descriptions of Africa's natural beauty.

Africa's diamonds, gold, platinum, tanzanite and many other scarce and precious stones and metals have long decorated the kings and queens of the earth and beautified the rich and famous of the entire world. The bounty of Africa's cocoa, the aroma of the coffee from our beautiful hills, the mouth-watering variety of nuts and fruits from our lands, the Nile Perch from Lake Victoria and prawns from the shores of Southern Africa are again only a fraction of what Africa offers the world.

More than anything, however, the beauty of Africa is its people. We are a mosaic of almost two thousand ethnic groups, tribes and clans; hundreds of languages and a multitude of cultures and histories. Though many when classified and grouped, the people of Africa are also inseparably woven together by a common destiny, history and a unique oneness underpinned by common values.

As much as it is a continent of beauty, however, Africa is also full of paradoxes. While nations and peoples afar off enjoy the fruits of our lands, rivers, lakes and seashores for a very little price, many of our fellow Africans do not even get adequate meals or safe and clean drinking water. While the petroleum from the ground under our feet drives the sleek cars of the rich many, the average African does not even have access to basic transportation facilities. While many of Africa's educated children deck the world's libraries with their literary and professional works, many of Africa's children do not even have access to good primary education. While Africa's doctors and nurses provide sophisticated medical services in other parts of the world, millions of mothers and children die in Africa every year due to lack of even the most basic health services.

It is high time that Africa took charge of its own destiny. While the assistance and cooperation of all people, organizations and governments of good will from elsewhere should be welcome, we should be convinced that no other nation,

organization or people can and will put Africa as its first priority more than Africans themselves.

It is we, especially the educated children of Africa, who have the responsibility to lead the way!

The new generation should also be prepared to sacrifice short-term gratification in the interest of advancing our struggle for economic and social emancipation. Some may say that the situation will not change regardless of what I may do personally. Discipline and sacrifice starts from you and me personally. We can then build up one by one.

So what can we do to propel the struggle from the Diaspora?

We need firstly to organize ourselves, to network and form solidarity groups wherever we may be in the world. We are in a collective struggle, as an African people, which needs to involve all our energies and resources. We need to develop common purposes in the Diaspora, to have extensions and branches of our political parties there to keep us in touch with developments at home.

Then we need to poise ourselves to represent and defend our countries and continent whenever Weapons of Mass Deception proliferate into our countries of residence to spread lies and deceptions. The BBC and CNN are wreaking havoc as far as defamation of the African continent is concerned. If we all play our role in countering the lies and deceptions of this imperialist media, we will have furthered the struggle in our own small ways.

Now to bread & butter issues, we need to bring economic gain to our countries by promoting tourism, trade and investment. Being in the Diaspora gives us access to potential tourists, machinery and products, as well as international capital. We need to commit ourselves to bringing some of these to our respective countries. In Zimbabwe the Third Chimurenga calls for all in the Diaspora to support not only the land reform, but also the Agrarian reforms which will transform Zimbabwe into a leading agro production and agro processing economy.

In conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Our struggle is for the economic and social emancipation of Africa. Our struggle is to sever of all forms of colonial tentacles which may still be hindering our progress as a continent. The struggle is not for ourselves, but many more generations to come after us. We, the children of Africa in the Diaspora should now dedicate our lives to this quest, and ensure that our beloved continent is raised to the levels of self-sufficiency and economic and social independence.

I thank you.