

## **DR DENIS MUKWEGE'S SPEECH IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE OF PWC 2025 (JUNE 4, 2025)**

It is a pleasure to be here in Helsinki to attend the World Pentecostal Conference under the theme "Go and make"

I wish to share a few words on the current state of play of the world order in which our Church has a responsibility.

The system of collective security and global protection of human rights established after the horrors of the Second World War has never been so tested : as we approach the 80th anniversary of the United Nations, the international order is being challenged and respect for human rights is being regressed throughout the world. As in all times of crisis, it is women and children who are the first victims.

The global consensus on democracy, the rule of law and human rights seem to be crumbling under the growing weight of authoritarian and oligarchic regimes.

Indeed, in a growing number of situations, the powerful seek to impose their will over the force of the law. The result is a dangerous weakening of the rule of law both nationally and internationally : heads of State and government disregard the basic principles of international law. They flout conventions relating to human rights and international humanitarian law on a daily basis, and ignore the decisions of the International Court of Justice.

Furthermore, the frequent application of the principle of double standards illustrates the cynicism and hypocrisy of international diplomacy. This is patent in Africa, and most especially in my country the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). We need to be aware that this selective indignation contributes to further undermining the credibility of multilateralism and United Nations.

Nevertheless, humanity and the planet are facing various existential threats, including the climate crisis, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, pandemics, and numerous conflicts. In the face of these global challenges that concern us all, it is worth remembering that the interdependence between countries and peoples has never been greater. We cannot stand by and accept the slow death of multilateralism based on the rule of law and respect for human rights.

It is in these times of crisis that moral leadership is crucially needed and that the prophetic voice of the Church needs to show the path, in line with the messages of Jesus, and to influence those having the political and economic power to plant the seeds for a more just and peaceful world, where respect of human dignity prevails on economic and financial interest.

At the heart of this divided and changing world, marked by cynical geopolitics and an era of impunity, lies the DRC. The DRC is currently facing a serious existential crisis following the latest war of aggression and occupation waged by the Kigali regime in collusion with the M23, a rebel armed group.

Over the past 30 years, repeated wars have claimed over 6 million Congolese lives. It is the bloodiest conflict since World War II but also one of the world's most neglected crises, which raise the question of the trivialization of human life in Africa. The Church has a role to play in ending the Congolese tragedy. The Church cannot tolerate that our Congolese sisters are raped with torture and our Congolese children are forced to join armed groups and denied their basic rights to freedom and peace.

As we have seen, the contemporary world is faced with numerous existential challenges. However, we believe that there is no inevitability in these crises. It is often in times of challenges or crises that solutions emerge.

We are confident that this World Pentecostal Conference will provide a platform for renewed leadership, and that our Churches will "go and make" all around the world to disseminate our prophetic voice and contribute to a better, fairer, more equitable, and more peaceful world, particularly in the heart of Africa, which is bleeding every day.