

NIGERIA'S STATEMENT DELIVERED BY
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AT THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE OPEN-WORKING
GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
(SDGS), 17-19 JUNE, 2013

Co- Chair

On behalf of my delegation I would like to express sincere appreciation to Your Excellency for convening the Fourth Session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We also thank the Technical Support Team for providing us with the issues briefs on these thematic areas. Nigeria aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of **FIJI** and on behalf of the G77, **DJIBOUTI** on behalf of Africa and **Ghana** on behalf of ECOWAS.

Co- Chair

Nigeria recalls that achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all was one of the targets to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty under the Millennium Development Goals. Regrettably, due to the confluence of crises of the past years – financial, food, fuel and environmental – most countries have moved further away from full employment and progress in eradicating poverty is uncertain and uneven.

Furthermore, research has indicated that about 45–50 million new jobs are needed each year over the next ten years to keep up with the growth of the world's working-age population

and reduce the unemployment caused by the crisis. We also note with concern that widening inequalities in income and opportunity within and across countries are not only weakening the social and political fabric of societies but are also fuelling downward cycle of economic, political and social uncertainty. We believe that employment opportunities including decent work for all are fundamental pillars of sustained and growing prosperity, inclusion and social cohesion. Global conception of work should therefore transcend the economic dimension and encompass also the human and social purpose that employment fulfills. In this regard, Nigeria is of the view that the masses of unemployed should not be seen as a ‘problem’ but as a ‘resource’ to be tapped into in order to achieve global development agenda. Thus, Nigeria therefore believes that in order to address the current weak and turbulent international economic environment, employment and decent work for all should be included in the MDGs successor.

Mr. Chair

On the means of implementation, we stress that an increased engagement of the private sector and international financial institutions in the development of Agriculture sector as well as small and medium-sized enterprises will boost employment and decent work for all. Also, parameters should be formulated to help national stakeholders define targets adaptable to circumstances and needs of countries, within the overall framework of equality, sustainability and human rights.

Furthermore, national targets should provide indicators to address key components relevant to different national contexts such as the special needs of women, youth and vulnerable groups, the weight of agriculture and informality. For many developing countries particularly in Africa, there is a need for global support of the investments in infrastructure that create jobs in the short-run and in skills and innovation that would raise workers' productivity and income over the medium term.

Regarding **social protection floors**, it is our view that national floors should be measured concretely to encompass access to health care and pensions, protection against the risks of unemployment and disability and protection against the special livelihood vulnerabilities of women and the elderly.

Mr. Chair

We believe that social protection floors play a leading role in enhancing resilience, stabilizing aggregate demand and protecting the most vulnerable groups. In addition, we believe that stable and sound government institutions committed to the rule of law, human rights, property rights and a benign environment for starting and growing businesses are fundamental elements for social protection. We reaffirm that development assistance are needed to kick-start nascent efforts to establish nationally defined

social protection floors and launch labour market programmes to address the special needs of women, youth and vulnerable people.

On Education,

Nigeria believes that education plays a fundamental role in the realization of sustained development and as such it must be prioritized in the post-2015 development agenda. Despite the progress made in the MDGs, millions of school-age children are currently out of school particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. As we attempt to address the gaps in the MDGs, we propose an inclusive and free high-quality education at all levels should be a stand-alone goal in the post-2015 agenda. In this context, we believe that due cognizance should be taken of vulnerable groups in order to address inequalities and discrimination, and disaggregation by gender, wealth, ethnicity and location.

Mr. Chair

On the means of implementation, the engagement of domestic resources and key actors such as the private sector, private corporations, donors, civil society and parents would be necessary. In addition, regular training for teachers cannot be over-emphasized.

Concerning culture, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, we wish to emphasize that the continued preservation of these heritages of mankind should be the primary

objective of their inclusion in the post-2015 framework. Peoples' traditions and cultural heritages should not be exposed to the vagaries of the market, or the profit motive, but should primarily be viewed as the collective reservoir of their world view and basis of dynamic relationships with their environment and nature. In this regard, traditional knowledge and beneficial cultural practices backed by modern scientific knowledge and technologies, should be deployed toward seeking solutions to acute problems such as environmental land degradation, food security, the education of children and the young, health care delivery, etc. We therefore call for the facilitation of the discussions on these important topics at the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC), UNESCO, and other fora in order to achieve global consensus on the protection of traditional cultural expressions and traditional knowledge.

I thank you, **Mr. Chair**