

Madam Chairperson,

Nigeria endorses fully the statements of the representatives of Senegal on behalf of the African Group and Sudan for G-77. We ^{commend} thank the panelists for their incisive presentation and analysis.

The panel discussion highlighted several important ~~issues~~ points on the subject of Land but most pertinent among these perhaps is the extent of land degradation and desertification in developing countries particularly in Africa and its consequence for food security, ~~poor~~ poverty eradication and development. It is being estimated that land degradation/desertification cost the world about 42 billion US dollars a year and that Africa alone loses about 9 billion US dollars a year. The human cost, which is obviously higher, cannot be truly quantified. The livelihoods of more than a billion people about a fifth of the global population, mainly in Africa, are now at risk. Land degradation also plays a role, long underestimated in generating instability, social breakdown and armed conflicts.

In tandem with the above is the impact of Climate Change which further aggravates the situation. Developing countries - particularly LDC SIDS and African countries have limited capacity to manage the catastrophic consequences of Climate Change on land. The IPCC in its report observed that African countries in particular are at the risk of being most affected by climate change. The continued loss of fertile topsoil and arable land leads to food insecurity. Water shortage is also threatening the sustainable livelihood of lower income groups in rural areas.

It is thereby pertinent that the nexus between Climate Change

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and land its implications and consequences is an issue that needs
 for greater sustained attention and is an area where the UN can
 bring substantive value additional to discussions on climate change. I
 understand the high-level summit discussions are being planned on the
 eve of the 64th UNGA. I would like to propose that this would be
 a useful opportunity to have sustained discussions on the nexus between
 climate change and land degradation/desertification; its implications
 and consequences. My delegation formally requests that this matter
~~should~~ be included in the chairperson's summary and that
 arrangements be made to table it on the occasion of
 a high-level event on climate change.

Consideration should also be given to increase substantially
 the allocation to the sustainable land management focal
 area of the Global Environment Facility. To assist in
 be at par with other focal areas of climate change
 and biodiversity to execute projects that will enhance
 land management and productivity.

I thank you.