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STATEMENT

DELIVERED BY

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ON

**THE THEME: CONFLICT PREVENTION,
POST – CONFLICT PEACE BUILDING AND
THE PROMOTION OF DURABLE PEACE,
RULE OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE**

AT THE

**EIGHTH SESSION OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

NEW YORK
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Mr. Co-Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Southern Africa Group of countries namely Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Zimbabwe and my country Zambia. Our group aligns itself with the Statements made by the Ambassador of Bolivia for the Group of 77 and China and the Africa Group statement made by the Ambassador of Guinea.

I wish to thank the panel for their presentations and the Secretariat for the Technical Support Team (TST) Issues Brief on goal on “Conflict Prevention, Post – Conflict Peace Building and the Promotion of Durable Peace, Rule of Law and governance. The Southern African group is aware of the breadth of the matters outlined that are also seemingly daunting to many societies including our countries in Southern Africa. We are of the view that conflict prevention, post-conflict peace building and the promotion of durable peace, rule of law and governance are enablers of sustainable development outcomes in their own right.

Mr. Co-Chair

On the issue of conflict prevention, post conflict peace building and the promotion of durable peace, our group notes that the pursuit of lasting peace and an end to conflict has become, together with sustainable development, a global imperative. While the link between development and conflict prevention has been frequently examined, the results of its examination remain largely inconclusive. Although it might appear intuitive that meeting the basic needs of poor communities holds the promise of eliminating many of the types of situations which favor the outbreak of conflict. The concept of sustainable development modifies this relationship considerably. In other words, the idea of peace forms an integral part of the idea of sustainable development.

The promotion of peace, which is a precondition to sustainable development, should not mean only the absence of war. It must include the absence of the threat of war. The avoidance of war - securing peace between and among states—remains a necessary condition for the security of people. The threat of interstate war, while less frequent in our times, continues to be a source of concern. However, armed conflicts are increasingly being fought within, rather than between states, particularly since the end of the Cold War. With technological advances and the proliferation of weaponry, if present trends on civilians continue, the future promises wars that will be more horrendous, and will exact much heavier toll on civilians.

Mr. Co- Chair,

The security of people from both violent and non-violent threats to their lives and/or well-being is dependent on the existence of certain conditions and is impeded by certain practices. A critical condition is sustainable development. Sustainable development needs sustainable peace, and sustainable peace involves the commitment to, or general consensus on, certain values that reject violence as a way of settling dispute.

Sustainable development is more than just the maintenance of resource flows; it requires that members of a community come to some sort of agreement about the shared interests that

override their individual ones and depends on having in place the social organization that is based on a framework that helps to facilitate social consensus and peace. Together, peace and sustainable development can be realized only within the context of specific communities, working towards specific goals.

Mr. Co-Chair

SADC remains committed to its conflict prevention strategies that include the establishment of early-warning systems in order to facilitate prompt action to prevent the outbreak and escalation of conflict, the creation of fora for mediation and arbitration, use of preventive diplomacy, negotiation and conciliation, development of collective security capacity and mutual defence pacts for response to external and internal threats and promotion of ratification of legal instruments for strengthening internal governance and inter-state relations.

Further efforts are being made to contribute to post conflict peace building and the promotion of durable peace. Among other strategies these have included the deployment of forces for peace enforcement, implementation of local integration programmes for former refugees and implementation of inclusive economic growth policies.

Mr. Co-Chair,

On the issue of the rule of law; there is a political consensus that the rule of law and good governance are a necessary foundation for efforts to achieve sustainable development. The rule of law provides the normative and institutional framework by which to enable the equitable realization of basic rights and fair access to benefits accruing from the resources available to the country and its society. It also helps to ensure stability, clarity, precision, predictability and transparency in public and private law processes including in contractual, commercial and foreign direct investment sectors. These processes, if they operate with consistency, fairness and on a non-discriminatory basis, help to spur growth and create a safe and secure environment.

Weak legal and judicial systems where laws are not enforced and non-compliance are the norm undermines respect for the rule of law, engender environmental degradation, and stifle progress towards sustainable development.

Mr. Co- Chair,

Critical examination of previous developmental process highlights that the rule of law and good governance concentrated on developing new laws and creating new institutions, rather than building capacity for ensuring compliance with existing rules. Yet without compliance, laws and regulations are meaningless or worse, they undermine respect for the rule of law and cannot promote sustainable development. As a result, many developing countries and countries with economies in transition still suffer from weak legal and judicial systems, lack investment, and have poor development prospects, sustainable or otherwise. Thus, the post 2015 development agenda and process, should ensure that the rule of law efforts include sufficient training and capacity building to establish the institutional foundation for compliance and enforcement, through both instrumental and normative efforts.

The need to incorporate the rule of law across development goals, through rule of law specific targets and indicators in support of other goals is crucial to the post 2015 process. However, we are cognizant of the different legal systems existing and in practice in our region; hence we recommend that any development goal target and measurement must be based on systems generated by a bottom-up approach and sensitive to national systems.

Mr. Co-Chair,

On the issue of governance; the Southern Africa Group of countries recognizes that governance is both an end in itself, and a critical pathway to delivering other sustainable development goals in the post 2015 era.

This is evident in that most countries in our group have acceded to the Africa Peer Review Mechanism; whose primary objective is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration through experience sharing and reinforcement of successful and best practices, including identifying deficiencies and assessment of requirements for capacity building.

We strongly acknowledge that while many factors play an important role in development, good governance is now recognized as playing an essential role in the advancement of sustainable development. Good governance promotes accountability, transparency, efficiency, and Rule of Law in public institutions at all levels.

In addition, it allows for sound and efficient management of human, natural, economic, and financial resources for equitable and sustainable development. Moreover, under good governance, there are clear decision making procedures at the level of public authorities, civil society participation in decision-making processes, and the ability to enforce rights and obligations through legal mechanisms.

Mr. Co-Chair,

We further acknowledge that without proper functioning institutions of governance based on the Rule of Law that promote social stability and legal certainty, there cannot be investment and sustainable development. Indeed, the strength of the rule of law is the best predictor of a country's economic success. Furthermore, deficiency in governance encourages high rates of corruption, with further devastating consequences on the confidence of economic actors. This lack of investment, in turn, slows economic growth and consequently deprives the governments of resources to invest in developmental endeavors, such as education, social safety nets, and sound environmental management, all of which are critical for sustainable development.

Mr. Co-Chair,

The group is of the understanding that, introduction of good governance and rule of law, however, cannot be done overnight. The process is often a gradual one, involving changes to long-standing practices, entrenched interests, cultural habits, social and even religious norms. In this regard, all goals and targets agreed must bear this fact and be realistic to country specific challenges.

Mr. Co-Chair,

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate the need for Sustainable Development Goals to be formulated and adopted should help advance conflict prevention, peace building, rule of law and good governance. The advancement of this core principles should help to develop and strengthen governance institutions to ensure compliance and enforcement critical for sustainable development.

I thank you.