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*Permanent Mission of  
the Republic of Benin  
to the United Nations*

**SIXTY NINTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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**INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA  
(DECLARATION)**

**STATEMENT  
BY**

**H.E.MR. JEAN -FRANCIS R. ZINSOU  
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS,  
CHAIR OF THE GLOBAL COORDINATION BUREAU OF LDCs**

**NEW YORK, 23 JUNE 2015**

Distinguished Co-chairs  
Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Group of LDCs aligns itself with the statement of the G77 and China. The group would like to make the following additional proposals taking into account the special challenges and vulnerabilities of LDCs.

**First proposal** is on the differential and preferential treatment to LDCs and the proposal would be as follows:

We reaffirm strengthened and scaled up global partnerships for sustainable development with the understanding and recognition that LDCs, as the most vulnerable group of countries, need enhanced global support and appropriate mechanisms at all levels for the achievement of the Post-2015 development agenda and SDGs. We recognize that LDCs would need additional, preferential, concessional and most favorable treatment for their access to markets, finance, technologies, know-how and other resources and differential and flexible treatment in undertaking international commitments and obligations which is called “Differential and Preferential Treatment for LDCs (DPTL)”.

**Second proposal** relates to growth and structural transformation, which as I mentioned yesterday, is a missing element in the zero draft. The proposal will read as follows:

We reaffirm the need for achieving sustained, equitable and inclusive economic growth in least developed countries, to at least the level of 7 per cent per annum, by strengthening their productive capacity in all sectors through structural transformation and overcoming their marginalization through their effective integration into the global economy, including through regional integration. We underline that this will require more strategic, comprehensive, and sustained approach based on ambitious, focused and realistic to bring about structural transformation in least developed countries that fosters accelerated, sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development and helps least developed countries meet long-standing as well as emerging challenges;

Our **third proposal** is on productive capacity building and the text would read as follows:

We stress that productive capacity building should be considered within a sustainable development policy framework that supports structural transformation as a means for increasing economic, environmental and social development and building resilience. We acknowledge that productive capacity building requires substantially upgrading human and institutional capacity

building, enhanced investment in physical infrastructure development, improved access to energy, which should be accompanied by improved trade, investment and development finance at all levels, enhanced capacity in the areas of entrepreneurship, technology and innovation and financial services;

Our **fourth proposal** is on agriculture and food security, which is another missing element in the declaration and the proposal will read as follows:

We recognize that agriculture, food and nutritional security and rural development are vitally important for developing countries, in particular Least Developed Countries. Agriculture plays a crucial role both in promoting food security and as the major economic activity for much of the population, with direct linkages to the eradication of poverty and hunger, rural development and gender equality and empowerment of women, as well as exports, commodity and production diversification and agro-processing capacity. We therefore agree to ensure adequate investment in physical infrastructure, scientific and technological development, research and agricultural extension services in LDCs. These issues have been thoroughly addressed in the Milan Declaration adopted on 9 June 2015 at the Ministerial Meeting of the African LDCs held in Milan Italy, from 8 to 10 June 2015.

Our **fifth proposal** is on global value chains and the para would read as follows:

We recognize that commodity diversification and value addition as well as effective participation of LDCs in regional and global value chains (GVCs) is a critical aspect of the efforts of these countries in reversing their marginalization, building productive capacities, accelerating structural transformation and generating decent jobs with quick impact on poverty eradication. Equally important is to gainfully link into GVCs by upgrading and increasing the domestic value-added content of LDCs' exports so that the commensurate production-linked gains are not lost. These require strategic policy interventions at the national, regional as well as at the sectoral level. In this regard, regional cooperation and integration can play a catalytic role; (Cotonou Agenda for productive capacity building in the Least Developed Countries).

**In paragraph 8** of the zero draft, after third sentence, we would like to add the following sentence: **LDCs, as the most vulnerable group of countries, remained off track in achieving most of the MDGs.** At the end of the fourth sentence of the same paragraph, we would like to propose the following phrase **“by providing focused and scaled up assistance to LDCs”**. The sentence will read as follows: We recommit ourselves to the full realization of the off-track MDGs **by providing focused and scaled up assistance to LDCs.**

In paragraph 28 we should consider capturing the spirit of the call of the people of the United Nations to promote peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's

human and economic resources contained in article 26 of the United Nations charter. This call can take its full meaning in our vision for the post 2015 development agenda. It is of the utmost importance for the realization of the goals and targets of the sustainable development that we mobilize the resources of humanity for the pursuit of its wellbeing and to meet its existential challenges. We should ensure the availability of maximum resources for human and economic needs.

One of the lessons we learnt from the MDGs era is that the “unmet commitments, inadequate resources, lack of focus and accountability, and insufficient dedication to sustainable development have created shortfalls in many areas” while military expenditure skyrocketed even in the situation of economic crisis which lead to drastic reduction of development assistance to LDCs. As stated in a report of the SIPRI: “The financial crisis and economic recession that have affected most of the globe appeared to have little effect on levels of military expenditure, arms production or arms transfers.” It is a fact that Arms races between competing nations consume scarce resources that could be better utilized to address the plight of the world’s desperately poor. More efforts should be undertaken to free more resources for the implementation of the sustainable development goals. In this spirit, efforts should be scaled up to reduce both demand for and supply of arms. Efforts to reduce the demand for arms in states of fragility by strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law, professionalizing the police, combating the glorification of violence, and tightening gun-control legislation, if pursued energetically, can enhance the prospects for socioeconomic development in many countries. This can work, if the international community shoulders its primary responsibility for international peace and security by addressing in an appropriate manner the systemic causes of violence and the global threats to international peace and security, including by enhanced support to regional integration and cooperation.

After **paragraph 36**, we would like to propose the following paragraphs:

We recommit ourselves for a genuine partnership and solidarity with understanding and recognition that the least developed countries, as the most vulnerable group of countries, need scaled up global support to implement effective national policies, enhanced and appropriate mechanisms at all levels for the achievement of the goals and objectives of this Programme of Action; (Based on IPoA, para 29c)

Our final proposal is on resilience building, which as I mentioned before, is vitally important for ensuring sustainability of the progress made by LDCs. The para would read as follows:

We recognize that the on-going impacts of economic, environmental and public health related shocks and crisis demonstrate the need for appropriate regional and international support to be

deployed in a timely and targeted manner to complement least developed countries' efforts aimed at building resilience in the face of various kinds of shocks and mitigating their effects. We therefore agree to operationalize a "crisis mitigation and resilience building funds" for LDCs to build their national capacity to respond to various kinds of shocks including financial crisis, natural disasters, and public health emergencies, without compromising the on-going multilateral mechanisms and processes.

We will submit our proposal in writing to you Mr. Co-chairs for your kind consideration.

I thank you!