Madam Chairperson,

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

The panel discussion highlighted several important 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, poverty, social disarray, and development. It is being estimated that land degradation/desertification cost the world about 4.2 billion US dollars a year and that Africa alone loses about 9 billion US dollars a year. The human cost, which is obviously much higher, cannot be truly quantified. The livelihoods of more than a billion people about a fifth of the global population, mainly in Africa, are 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 the LDCs and African countries, have limited capacity to manage the adverse effects of climate change on land. The IPCC in its 2014 report observed that African countries are particularly at 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 poorer income groups in rural areas. It is thereby pertinent that the nexus between Climate Chan
and land is implicated and consequently is an issue that needs further 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 understanding the high-level summit discussions are being planned on the nexus between climate change and land degradation/desertification; its implications and consequences. My delegation formally requests that this matter is 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 the fight with other focal areas of Climate Change and biodiversity to execute projects that will enhance land management and productivity.

I thank you.