

*Mission Permanente
de la République du Bénin
auprès des Nations Unies*



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

SIXTY EIGHT SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE OWG ON SDGs

**(Poverty eradication, building shared prosperity and promoting equality
Sustainable agriculture, food security, and nutrition)**

**STATEMENT
BY**

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
CHAIR OF THE GLOBAL COORDINATION BUREAU OF LDCs**

NEW YORK, 5 MAY 2014

**Distinguished Co-Chairs
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of LDCs. This statement supplements the statement made by Bolivia on behalf of the G77 and China.

At the outset, the Group of LDCs would like to commend the distinguished Co-Chairs for preparing this working document which captures a good number of proposals made by LDCs. During the course of this week, the Group would articulate the issues that are vitally important and need to be reflected under various focus areas.

[Poverty eradication, building shared prosperity and promoting equality]

The Group of LDCs would reiterate its position that they would like to see the eradication of poverty as a standalone and overarching goal of the SDGs.

We support the provision under sub-item “a” to “end extreme poverty by 2030”. The Group would like to strengthen the provision under sub-item “b” and to set a target to end the proportion of people living below national poverty lines by 2030. For LDCs, the national poverty line mostly corresponds to the requirements of minimum calorie intakes per person per day. The group would like to widen the scope of the proposal made under sub-item “d” to capture the resilience building of the poor and reduce the deaths and economic losses related to all kinds of risks and shocks and not to limit it to natural disasters.

The Group of LDCs would reiterate its position that the issue of inequality would better suit within the context of growth, productive capacity and employment. We need to set a target on “promoting differentially high per capita income growth at the bottom of the income distribution” in line with the proposal made under 8 (a) of the working document.

For poverty eradication, **means of implementation** is vitally important. We need enhanced ODA with long-term predictability and as a direct budgetary support on a sustained basis. Access to nutritious food at a sufficient level is also essential. With a view to ensuring employment for the poor, access to finance and productive capacity building are crucial.

[Sustainable agriculture, food security, and nutrition]

The Group of LDCs would like to see the reflection of “rural development” under this focus area, which is in line with the IPoA. We support the provisions reflected under 2 (a) and 2 (b) in the working document. We would add some elements to the list of highlighted issues by including anemia, and overweight/obesity, However, the targets enumerated in the second part under 2 (c), which is “reduce intensity of use of water by at least x%, chemicals by at least y%, and energy by

at least z%” would be highly capital and technology-intensive. Such a target would be very difficult for LDCs to comply with, unless they are matched with adequate financial and technological supports. As regard the concept of “high yields”, we would like to caution against resort to harmful practices such as industrial agriculture and other unsustainable practices such as GMOs and extensive herbicide and synthetic fertilizers use. Increase in yields should be pursued through sustainable means.

As regards the point 2d) we would suggest following wording :”by 2030, substantively increase smallholder food producers’ income and productivity through access to adequate inputs, productive resources, financial services and markets for small farmers and fishers, with a particular focus on women and indigenous peoples”.

We should enhance support to maintain and regenerate natural resources and ecosystems. In this sense, the Group will suggest reformulating the target under f as follows: ***achieve a land degradation neutral world, through sustainable land use policies and drought preparedness policies by 2020.***

The Group of LDCs would like to include the following three additional targets:

- (a) increase agricultural productivity by at least three times with a focus on sustainably increasing smallholder yields and access to irrigation [In 2010, agricultural productivity in LDCs was only 17% of the level of middle income developing countries];
- (b) substantially increase investment in rural infrastructure; and
- (c) further explore the feasibility, effectiveness and administrative modalities of a system of stockholding in dealing with humanitarian food emergencies or as a means to limit price volatility.
- d) reshape trade policies to eliminate harmful agricultural subsidies

The Group stands for a disaggregation of the issue of nutrition to highlight its aspects, especially undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overnutrition.

On the appropriate means of implementation, LDCs would reiterate the following proposals, in line with the IPoA:

- (a) providing enhanced financial and technical support for the development of the agricultural sector;
- (b) supporting efforts aimed at increasing agricultural production and productivity including through enhanced investment in agronomic science research and development;

- (c) supporting LDCs' efforts to establish or strengthen safety nets such as access to agricultural finance, insurance and other risk-mitigation tools;
- (d) providing resources to the relevant United Nations agencies to expand and enhance food assistance and safety net programmes to address hunger and malnutrition in LDCs, to ensure the realization of the right to adequate food ;
- (e) supporting LDCs efforts to establish or strengthen agricultural and/or marine research and development institutions, and most importantly;
- (f) providing and supporting LDCs with high-yielding and climate-resilient crop varieties, including saline-, drought- and submersion-compatible species, through transfer of appropriate technology and technical know-how, including by reclaiming degraded land.

The Group however, would express some reservation on the concept of climate-smart agriculture, which may include practices inconsistent with cultural values and harmful manipulation of ecosystems.

The Group calls for a comprehensive approach to issues related to agriculture, food security by integrating in the search for solutions to the related problems the existing linkages with poverty eradication and inclusive growth, health (via nutrition), gender equality and women's empowerment, water and sanitation, energy, ecosystems and biodiversity, and marine resources. Taking into account the constraints of LDC, the Group suggests that reference be made to the need for enhancing support to LDCs to achieve the targets under those focus areas.

I thank you all for your kind attention.