

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen;

At the outset I wish to congratulate you on your election to Chair the Twelfth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. You can rest assured of our unconditional support as you conduct the affairs of CSD-12.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, on our behalf as well as the Chairman of the African Group.

Mr. Chairman,

The present session takes place two years after the historic Johannesburg Summit and provides us with an opportunity to review the progress made in the implementation of critical areas for poverty eradication and sustainable development, namely water, sanitation and human settlements.

Although some progress have been registered, particularly in the provision of services and infrastructure for water, sanitation and human settlements as shown in the reports of the Secretary General before us, developing countries still face enormous difficulties in terms of financial resources, appropriate technologies and required capacities. Thus, more efforts are required from the international community to tackle the weaknesses that have been identified.

Mr. Chairman,

Poverty reduction remains the top priority of the Government of Mozambique. We are pleased to report that the implementation of our Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute

Poverty (PARPA) has been registering good results. Indeed, the first review progress that has just been undertaken shows that absolute poverty has fallen from 69% in 1996-97 to 54% in 2002-3.

In our efforts to achieve strong and sustained economic growth towards reducing absolute poverty, we have been consistently making efforts to ensure that environmental aspects are given due consideration in policy-making. It is in this regard that we are finalizing the preparation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, as a complementary instrument to PARPA. This Strategy incorporates all the major recommendations from WSSD as well as MDG's. As we believe in regional implementation, the Strategy gives due consideration to the priorities identified under NEPAD, particularly its Environment Initiative.

Mr. Chairman,

The recent influx of Mozambican population into the cities, largely from rural areas, has not been accompanied by the necessary infrastructure development particularly increased capacity in urban water and sanitation systems. Not only are new city poorly served, but service provision quality in general has been slow to improve. With less than 35% access to water supply, Mozambique has one of the lowest urban coverage rates in the world. The same applies to rural water. In sanitation, 50% of urban dwellers have access to adequate services (mostly on-site solutions), while only one in four rural people has a functioning latrine.

Mozambique's Poverty Reduction Strategy places water and sanitation infrastructure as one of six priority areas for accelerating equitable and sustainable human and economic development. In this regard the Government of Mozambique is working hard to ensure that by the year 2015, approximately 70% of the population will have access to safe drinking water, and 62% to improved sanitation, thus contributing also to reduce or avoid water born diseases such as diarrhea, malaria and cholera, originated by poor quality of drinking water

and bad sanitation conditions and are the main causes of mortality, together with HIV/AIDS.

In addressing water and sanitation issues, we are engaged in promoting the participation of the civil society and the private sector. Community Water Committees were established in the country with the objective of facilitating the management and access to drinking water. The involvement of the private sector in the sector has resulted in the increased qualitative and quantitative access to water.

The Government is also engaged in promoting low cost housing for youth and most vulnerable people. New policies and legislation were adopted or are being prepared in order to address human settlement issues. We are also pleased to report the support of our development partners, particularly UN-HABITAT

Mr. Chairman,

Mozambique is committed to meeting the targets agreed to in Agenda 21 and subsequently contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, through the integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development.

In ensuring regional implementation we believe that trans-boundary integrated water management should guide our effort to achieve MDG's and the JPOI. To this end, and taking into account our extreme vulnerability, we signed recently agreements with our neighboring countries with the aim to improve river management, in the context of the SADC Protocol on Shared Water Courses.

Mr. Chairman,

We are ready to do our task. However, given our weak economic capacity, our efforts can only be successful if we benefit from effective international assistance to create the

necessary capacity at all levels to implement sound policies. Capacity building has to be extended to the private sector since in some of our countries it is still very weak.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, I express our hope that this CSD could contribute to keep the momentum of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, when our Heads of States and Government have reaffirmed the collective commitment of poverty eradicating and promotion of sustainable development for all countries and peoples of the world.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.