

INTERVENTION BY GEOFREY G. KANZA, DELEGATE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, ON THEMATIC DISCUSSION CONCERNING LAND DURING THE CDS-16.

Mr Chairperson,

My delegation aligns itself with the Statement made on behalf of G-77 and China.

As Dr. Michael Taylor clearly stated here yesterday during the afternoon session, “Land is Life”. It is indeed a precious asset which plays a significant role in the process of poverty alleviation through wealth creation to improve the wellbeing of the people. Access to land, its ownership and management are vital to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Land in Tanzania is managed under three main categories, namely, Reserved Land, Village Land and General Land. Land utilisation and management are governed by the Land Act and Village Land Act of 1999, respectively. The Acts presents a radical shake-up on Land issues which were for the first time introduced in Tanzania through the National Land Policy of 1995.

Among other things, the Policy emphasises fair land acquisition and ownership; equitable access to land by all Tanzanian citizens; provision of legal status to people without formal ownership of their lands; introduction of land dispute mechanism from village to the apex Court of the Country, i.e. Court of Appeal; and sustainable management of land and its conservation.

Mr Chairperson,

As well as the National Land Policy and Land Legislations, there are several policies and legislations that protect land against degradation, by among other things, providing clear demarcated boundaries within and outside farmlands and protected natural forests and woodlands. These are the National Environment Policy (1997); the Environment

Management Act (2004); the Forest Act (2002); and the Urban Planning Act (2007) to name but a few.

Being a precious resource, land in Tanzania like in other countries is always in high demand. The demand is associated with several land uses and human developmental factors such as development and expansion of urban areas; ownership of land as collateral to secure loans; high demand for grazing and agriculture; increased awareness of land value particularly among women and population increase. Some of these factors pose a great challenge to Tanzania.

To address the land related challenges, Tanzania has taken several measures which include but are not limited to the land tenure reforms; promotion of democracy through decentralisation whereby the Government's role remain one of rendering technical and financial assistance; promotion and consolidation of policies on security in land tenure including recognition of customary land ownership; increased transparency and efficiency in land administration to prevent corruption; strengthening of training institution on land matters; involvement of Civil Society in land matters; demystification, translation and dissemination of the new Land legislations to local communities; and introduction of land information systems and geographical information systems that cover district, regional and national levels including the establishment of a website which is administered by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements.

As highlighted by one of the panellist, Ms. Rowshan Jahan Moni, the high demand for land for cultivation of bio-fuels, will affect the balance of land distribution, leave alone subsistence food production to the rural communities. Globally, there should be a clear policy on how this issue should be tackled for the benefit of all.

I thank you Mr Chairperson.