Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Swaziland
to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

BEFORE THE SECOND COMMITTEE
ON AGENDA ITEM 19: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Chairperson,

As it is the first time that I address this Committee let me begin by congratulating you and the other Members of the Bureau on your election. Let me also thank all the Speakers for their informative and interesting introductory statements on this agenda item.

I further wish to thank the Secretary-General for all his reports and we note the recommendations contained therein. My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and Ethiopia on behalf of the Africa Group respectively.

Chairperson,

At the Conference on Sustainable Development (RIO+20), Heads of State and Governments and other High – Level Representatives reaffirmed the commitment of the International Community to Sustainable Development. This is meant to ensure the promotion of an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable future for the planet and for present and future generations and also to free humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency.

These commitments not-withstanding, as we set the stage for the Post 2015 Development Agenda we must not forget that we have at least 2 years before we reach the deadline for the MDGs. Though it may seem that time is running out, let us do the best we can, keeping in mind that the world is counting on us to fulfill the commitments of the MDGs. So whilst we work towards setting the next Development Agenda and a new set of Development Goals let us take into account those MDGs that remain.

Chairperson,

As we look forward to 2015, the Kingdom of Swaziland continues to implement national initiatives. In particular, the Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (PRSAP). This policy framework is on course to conform to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which have been mainstreamed in the PRSAP targets and have been customized to fit Swaziland’s planning framework.

The ultimate goal of the PRSAP is to reduce poverty by more than 50% by 2015 and eventually eradicating it by 2022. This will be in tune with what we describe as the Vision 2022 which states that by 2022 Swaziland will be classified in the top 10% of middle income developing countries, according to the human development index.

It is in this regard, Chairperson, that my delegation supports the view that The Post 2015 Development Agenda framework needs to be an Agenda that addresses the root causes of poverty. It should be one which is cognizant of the special development needs of developing countries, especially those in Africa. It also needs to lay emphasis on the urgency for the developed partners to honor their ODA commitment, and should also incorporate the issue of global partnerships as these have a key role in the post-2015 development framework.
Chairperson,

The Kingdom of Swaziland is a small country covering an area of 17,360 in southeastern Africa, and agriculture is the main source of livelihood of the majority of people. About 70% of the population live in rural areas and derive their livelihoods from agriculture.

It is in this vein that my delegation emphasizes the importance of promoting sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition through, the improvement of food production, agricultural modernization, agri-business development, agro-industry backward and forward linkages, integration of smallholder farmers, including women, into agri-business value chains, and the establishment of national and regional information exchange mechanisms on agriculture and food security.

Chairperson,

In addition, the Kingdom of Swaziland recognized the need to incorporate deforestation, desertification, drought, climate change and the loss of biodiversity into the Post 2015 development Agenda. The world has seen an untold increase in global environmental problems which threaten the very continuation and welfare of future generations as it negates efforts on poverty eradication and global food security. Stories abound across the world of irregular weather patterns, sporadic droughts and flooding, a situation that directly impinges on the long-term productivity of the land.

This phenomena has hit the Kingdom of Swaziland hard resulting in rangeland degradation, depletion of water resources, emergence of alien invasive species, prevalence of pests and diseases thus affecting crops and livestock, and upsetting the balance of our agro-based economy.

Chairperson,

The Kingdom Of Swaziland has been applying all means possible to meet the challenges posed by these phenomena. As a result, in 1998, we formulated a National Action Program on Combating Land Degradation, prioritizing sustainable land management and water utilization. We improved water harvesting and conservation through the construction of small, medium and large dams.

Chairperson,

It will be remiss of me if I don’t mention the importance of the energy sector to the sustainable development endeavour that we envisage at the United Nations. Energy is the cornerstone of all our development efforts, for it cuts across all other sectors to the extent that none of the development targets can ever be achieved without it.

It is for this reason that my delegation calls upon the Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals to coin a goal that will address the issue of energy, and in the same vein, I call upon the United Nations body, to look at establishing a Department of Energy as a stand alone department.
Chairperson,

In conclusion let me reiterate that we still have until 2015 to meet the commitments made by our Heads of State and Governments at the Millennium summit, therefore let us not lose focus on meeting these Goals, or alternatively we need to incorporate those MDGs that will not be met by 2015 into the next set of goals for the good of humanity.

Chairperson,

Lastly, let me point out that the provision of adequate financial resources, transfer of environmentally sound technologies and technical assistance to developing countries, is critical if we are to achieve our global objectives. We therefore appeal to our Developed Partners to honour their commitments as a matter of priority. I Thank You